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## Senate

The Senate met at 12 noon and was called to order by the President pro tempore (Mr. GRASSLEY).

### PRAYER

The Chaplain, Dr. Barry C. Black, offered the following prayer:

Let us pray.

Our Father in Heaven, You are our shield and deliverer. You, O God, are our light and salvation. So we refuse to be afraid. Continue to be the strength of our lives, as we remember the many times You have protected and preserved America in the past.

Lord, inspire our lawmakers with Your presence so that the words of their mouths and the meditations of their hearts will be acceptable to You. Help them to remember that You are an ever-present help for turbulent times, eager to empower those who depend upon Your might.

We pray in Your strong Name. Amen.

### PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The President pro tempore led the Pledge of Allegiance, as follows:

I pledge allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America, and to the Republic for which it stands, one nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.

### RECOGNITION OF THE MAJORITY LEADER

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. LANKFORD). The majority leader is recognized.

S. 1

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, as I have discussed several times, the Strengthening America's Security in the Middle East Act is a consequential legislative package that would strengthen vital partnerships and reaffirm our active role in matters of global concern. I am proud to support it. I

was also proud to lay down an amendment yesterday that would allow the Senate to speak equally forcefully on critical subjects in American foreign policy.

The United States is engaged in Syria and Afghanistan for one simple reason: because our enemies are engaged there. Real dangers to us and to our allies still remain in both of these nations. So we must continue to confront them there. Fortunately, we are not alone. We are joined in the counter-ISIS coalition by 78 other partners, and in both Syria and Afghanistan, local fighters are bearing the brunt—the brunt—of the work.

But American leadership is absolutely essential, and that is what this amendment is all about. My amendment is not partisan. It expresses views and concerns from Senators on both sides of the aisle, and it certainly isn't political. I intended it as an opportunity for the Senate to debate and vote on some of the more consequential matters of the day, and I expected this institution to rise to the occasion.

I was a Senator on September 11, 2001. I don't want America to ever live through another day like that—none of us do.

I have also been here in the Senate for the 17 years since—17 years of American engagement in worldwide efforts to combat terrorism. It hasn't been easy navigating American interests through this complicated and troubled region. It hasn't been easy adapting to an entirely new way of warfare against enemies that have proven adaptive themselves.

It is understandable that as we get further from September 11, many would grow tired of our military efforts a long way from home, but as decisions from the Obama administration have made painfully clear, leaving too abruptly carries its own grave risks.

Had President Obama known that ISIS would emerge in the wake of his withdrawal from Iraq and flourish in

the chaos of the Syrian civil war, I suspect he might have done things differently. Perhaps he would not have abandoned Iraq so precipitously, ignored the growing terror threats in Syria, or allowed Assad to steamroll over his now-infamous “red line.”

We can't undo this unfortunate history, but we certainly cannot afford to repeat it. So it has been a welcome contrast to see the Trump administration make huge progress reinvigorating our fight against al-Qaida in Afghanistan and ISIS in Syria. Unshackling our military has led to progress on the ground, greater pressure placed on the terrorists, and new opportunities for diplomatic and political solutions that have opened up as a result of the pressure that we have applied.

So what we must remember is how hard won these gains have been. Our response to this progress must not be to take our foot off the gas pedal but rather to keep up those strategies that are clearly working.

Our partnership with Iraqi security forces and the Syrian Democratic Forces have stripped ISIS of much territory in those two nations, but we have not yet defeated ISIS. We have not yet defeated al-Qaida in Afghanistan. Civil wars continue to rage in both Syria and Afghanistan. There are still cauldrons—cauldrons—of sectarianism, extremism, and terror.

President Trump is right that this cannot be America's fight alone. The threats that ISIS and al-Qaida pose are global. That is why many countries are with us in this fight. There is more that those partners can and should do to keep up direct pressure on terrorists and on outside actors who interfere with diplomatic efforts to resolve these wars.

Putin's Russia and the ayatollahs in Tehran need to pay a real price for their attempts to back butchers—like the Assad regime, Hezbollah, and the Taliban.

We also need to understand that if we withdraw too soon—too soon—we will

• This “bullet” symbol identifies statements or insertions which are not spoken by a Member of the Senate on the floor.



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create vacuums in Syria and Afghanistan. We know from experience that Russia and Iran would be only too happy to fill those vacuums.

If we truly care about containing Russia, the battleground is not only on Twitter or Facebook but also in the world of old fashioned geopolitics.

So my amendment would offer Senators the ability to speak on all these subjects. I honestly did not expect this would be controversial stuff. I didn't expect that my colleagues across the aisle would make a partisan stand and try to block this straightforward "sense of the Senate" amendment when it really just restates—restates—what most of us thought was a broad bipartisan consensus about American leadership in the world, but that is what our Democratic colleagues did.

They tried to block it. Democrats objected to a vote on this amendment, apparently because it would expose a rift among their own membership—a division between those Senate Democrats who still subscribe to the vision for America's leadership and their colleagues who have abandoned those principles at the urging of the very far left or are too afraid to take either position—either one. It is quite the split. It shows how caught up my Democratic colleagues are in the partisanship of this moment.

My amendment simply reemphasizes the expertise and counsel offered by experts who have served Presidents of both parties. It is a mainstream amendment with 19 cosponsors, but apparently a significant portion of today's Democratic Party isn't sure—isn't sure—they believe in these principles any more. They would rather try to squash the debate and dodge the vote altogether.

Well, that is not going to work. These are exactly the kinds of issues the Senate should be debating. The Senate has a special role in foreign policy.

Americans are serving in harm's way in Syria and Afghanistan. The American servicemembers, diplomats, and aid workers in those conflict zones all deserve to know whether their elected officials support their efforts or whether we no longer believe their tireless efforts serve our national interest.

Our constituents deserve to know which Senators welcome a thorough debate over Syria and Afghanistan and which are simply trying to duck the debate. Well, despite my Democratic colleagues' attempt, I can assure the American people that they are going to learn precisely that. I filed cloture on the amendment yesterday afternoon, and we will vote on it. Regardless of whatever political contortions the far left may be demanding from Senate Democrats, the American people are going to learn exactly where their Senators stand. Our institution will not shrink from this important duty.

H.R. 1

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, on an entirely different matter, I spoke for the first time, yesterday, on the subject that House Democrats have crowned as their signature effort for this Congress—H.R. 1, also known as the "Democratic Politician Protection Act." Speaker PELOSI and her colleagues are advertising it as a package of urgent measures to save American democracy. What it really seems to be is a package of urgent measures to rewrite the rules of American politics for the exclusive benefit of the Democratic Party.

Yesterday, I gave a brief tour through several of the most bizarre components of their proposal. Today, I would like to focus on just one of the legislation's major victims—the American taxpayer.

H.R. 1 would victimize every American taxpayer by pouring their money into expensive new subsidies that don't even pass the laugh test. In several new ways, it would put every taxpayer on the hook to line the pockets of candidates, campaigns, and outside consultants.

Do you look forward to bumper stickers, robocalls, attack ads, and campaign mail that descend on the country in seemingly endless cycles?

Speaker PELOSI must think you do, because she wants you to pay for these things with your tax dollars. You get the opportunity, with your money, to pay for attack ads and bumper stickers and the rest. This bill creates brand-new government subsidies—government subsidies—both for political campaign donors and for the campaigns themselves.

The Federal Government would start matching political donations the same way some employers match gifts to charity. You would be literally funding attack ads for the candidates you disagree with. How about that—your money funding ads for the candidates you disagree with?

Maybe that is why every Democrat opposed our tax cuts for middle-class families and small businesses. They were counting on that money to pull off this stimulus package, if you will, for campaign consultants.

And for what reason? To increase the competition? Well, studies have shown that incumbents win just as often in taxpayer-funded elections as they do when campaigns are funded with private money.

To reduce corruption? Hardly. Jurisdictions that have toyed with taxpayer-funded political systems have turned out to be replete with misappropriation, personal use, straw donors, and public corruption scandals.

So I remain curious why, exactly, the "Democratic Politician Protection Act" wants to offer the American people's money to thousands of candidates that run for the House of Representatives every 2 years, whether they support these candidates or not. They want citizens to bankroll political materials that they totally disagree with.

But they aren't stopping there. Democrats also want taxpayers on the hook for generous new benefits for Federal bureaucrats and government employees.

Their bill would make election day a new paid holiday for government workers and create an additional brandnew paid leave benefit for up to 6 days for any Federal bureaucrat who decides they would like to hang out at the polls during any election. Just what America needs—another paid holiday and a bunch of government workers being paid to go out and work, I assume, for our colleagues on the other side on their campaigns.

This is the Democrats' plan to "restore" democracy—a brandnew week of paid vacation for every Federal employee who would like to hover around while you cast your ballot? A Washington-based, taxpayer-subsidized clearinghouse for political campaign funding? It is a power grab that is smelling more and more like exactly what it is.

#### RESERVATION OF LEADER TIME

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the leadership time is reserved.

#### CONCLUSION OF MORNING BUSINESS

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Morning business is closed.

#### STRENGTHENING AMERICA'S SECURITY IN THE MIDDLE EAST ACT OF 2019—Resumed

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senate will resume consideration of S. 1, which the clerk will report.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

A bill (S. 1) to make improvements to certain defense and security assistance provisions and to authorize the appropriation of funds to Israel, to reauthorize the United States-Jordan Defense Cooperation Act of 2015, and to halt the wholesale slaughter of the Syrian people, and for other purposes.

Pending:

McConnell amendment No. 65, to express the sense of the Senate that the United States faces continuing threats from terrorist groups operating in Syria and Afghanistan and that the precipitous withdrawal of United States forces from either country could put at risk hard-won gains and United States national security.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Texas.

Mr. CORNYN. Mr. President, I appreciate the fact that the majority leader has put before the Senate an important piece of legislation that reemphasizes our support for our allies in the Middle East, a very dangerous neighborhood that has a tendency to have others drawn into the neighborhood and into the fight. This legislation is comprised of four bills that have enjoyed bipartisan support, but we weren't able to

get them done before the deadline at the end of the 115th Congress.

Each of these four bills speaks directly to our national security interests in the Middle East and the support for our allies, particularly allies like Jordan and Israel. Every day, the State of Israel faces attacks from adversaries in the region, ranging from rocket and missile attacks to various explosives and foot soldiers—namely, Hezbollah, the Iranian-financed and trained effort to try to exterminate the Jewish State.

Israel is also enduring a different type of warfare, this time an economic war known as Boycott, Divestment, and Sanctions or the BDS movement. This campaign began in 2005 with more than 170 Palestinian nongovernmental organizations lobbying foreign governments, corporations, and academic institutions to sever all their ties with Israel. In the years since, this movement has expanded with participants seeking to isolate Israel both economically and politically.

For some, their participation in the movement is simply a means of voicing their opposition to Israeli policies in the Middle East—something that at least in the United States, they have every right to do under the First Amendment. For others, though, it is part of a strategy to isolate Israel politically and economically, either to delegitimize the State or to force it to redraw its map.

State-sponsored BDS is incredibly harmful. We have seen support for BDS in capitals across Europe and, sadly, even in the United Nations, where the movement has been supported by countries with questionable humanitarian records, such as China, Russia, and Venezuela. A few years ago, the U.N. Human Rights Council called for the creation of a so-called blacklist, naming companies that do business with Israel. Then, in a report in January, the U.N. Human Rights Council laid the groundwork for utilizing those databases to boycott those businesses, including at least 22 American companies.

It is shameful, really, that the U.N. has chosen to fuel this movement by encouraging countries to boycott these businesses for what they claim are illegal activities, even though that argument has absolutely no bearing on either the United States or Israel. This effort to choke off Israel's economy by ending business ties with other countries could have serious impacts. We want to make sure State and local governments have the flexibility to avoid business with entities that support the BDS movement if they wish.

One of the bills included in the legislation we are considering is called the Combating BDS Act, led by our colleagues Senator RUBIO and Senator MANCHIN.

Before I talk about what the bill does, I want to talk about what it does not do. Nothing in this bill restricts constitutionally protected speech. The law only impacts commerce-related or

investment-related activities in the course of interstate or international commerce. The law does not punish companies for expressing their opposition to Israel or its policies or engaging in anti-Israel boycotts, for example.

What this legislation does do, however, is clarify that State and local governments have every right to counter boycotts of Israel without fear that they are somehow violating Federal law. It assures those local governments and State governments that if they decide not to issue contracts or otherwise do business with entities that are boycotting or divesting from Israel, they have every legal right to do so. This is not a new concept, as 34 States have already enacted legislation to combat BDS.

In 2017, Texas became the 18th State to pass legislation preventing tax dollars being used to support the boycott of Israel. When Governor Abbott signed that bill into law, he said, at the time, “Anti-Israel policies are anti-Texas policies, and we will not tolerate such actions against an important ally.”

I agree with his sentiment, certainly, and I believe it is time to provide all 50 States with the flexibility to make this decision to forgo any business that would harm the Jewish State.

It goes without saying, but perhaps we should reiterate that Israel is an important and valuable friend and ally to the United States. It is one of the main stabilizing influences in the Middle East, an admittedly dangerous neighborhood, with aggressors on all sides wanting to literally wipe the State of Israel off the map. Of course, Israel is the only democracy in the Middle East. Ensuring its viability is critical to protecting U.S. interests abroad and here at home, and it is important that we support our closest ally in the region.

Passing this legislation is a step to support Israel in their efforts to promote democracy in the Middle East. It takes a strong stance against the anti-Israel and anti-Semitic BDS movement and confirms our longstanding support of Israel. So I look forward to voting yes on this important legislation when the time comes, hopefully, very soon.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. ROBERTS. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

(The remarks of Mr. ROBERTS pertaining to the introduction of S. 273 are printed in today's RECORD under “Statements on Introduced Bills and Joint Resolutions.”)

Mr. ROBERTS. Mr. President, I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. BLUNT. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

S. 1

Mr. BLUNT. Mr. President, the Senate is currently debating the Strengthening America's Security in the Middle East Act. These are issues that we need to deal with, and it is really an important time to be talking about these issues.

Really, there are four different things that this bill does.

The first thing this bill does is to go further in providing security for Israel. I think virtually everybody in the Senate—there may be an exception or two—understands that Israel is our greatest ally in the Middle East, that Israel is a great source of intelligence for us as we try to work our way through problems in the Middle East, and that we rely on Israel for the partnership we have there in the things that Israel has done to study and test. Unfortunately, it has gotten to test in real situations military defense systems that will intercept things that are coming at us. As for the whole concept of a bullet that can hit a bullet, which some people thought was such a farfetched idea when President Reagan talked about it in the 1980s, Israel has proven one can do it with our help with regard to some of the technology. It is a partnership. Israel, unfortunately, is in a place that actually uses it to really intercept things that are coming at its citizens, and we found out it works.

Security for Israel is security for the United States. In 2016, the United States and Israel signed a 10-year agreement on security assistance. This bill makes sure that the agreement will continue to have the full force of law. This legislation makes sure that we are giving some concrete aid to help Israel protect itself and to protect its own security.

It also states very clearly that the policy of the United States is to ensure that Israel can counter and defeat threats when it faces its enemies. These are countries and other groups that don't like Israel. It is in their schools, their propaganda, and their commitments as nations to talk about the importance of Israel's not existing. In fact, some of them use maps on which Israel doesn't exist. If you were to look at the educational structures of some of Israel's neighbors, you would have to find something outside of what you learn in school to understand that there even is an Israel. Of course, there is Iran, Hezbollah, and Hamas. There are plenty of threats to Israel and to what Israel and the United States stand for.

This part of the bill has previously passed both Houses of the Congress in slightly different forms. Now it is time for both Houses to pass it in the same form, to put it on the President's desk

so as to further defend and define the things that are there. This is an important thing to do.

The second part of the bill extends our cooperation between us and Jordan. We have no more faithful partner outside of Israel than Jordan. Frankly, that Israeli-Jordan border is critically important in how that cooperation works. We saw what happened when the Syrians looked for a safe place to go, and they went to Jordan. So we have done our best to ensure that Jordan can meet its humanitarian crisis based on what has happened in Syria. The economic stability of Jordan—believe me—is critical to the economic stability of the region. This bill also comes up with new ways to assist our allies when they face these unanticipated situations, and some of these situations last for a long time once they start.

The third part of the legislation imposes sanctions on anyone who does business with the Government of Syria. The tragedy of Syria—the tragedy of the Syrian people, the chemical warfare of Bashar Assad, the barrel bombs that have been dropped in neighborhoods where innocent people live, those being children and senior citizens, and where people are trying to work every day—makes it clear that this is not a country that we should support.

Actually, this portion of the legislation already passed the House by voice vote. We need to join the House with its commitment to continue to put pressure on Syria for Syria to meet the standards that civilization should require of those we deal with. We can't deal with Syria as long as it continues to act in the way it has been acting. It is something we know needs to be done. Hopefully, we will have a vote that will move this further toward reality.

The fourth part of the package we are talking about is another thing that we can do in our support for Israel. There are groups of people who seek to target Israel through a series of boycotts and disinvestments and sanctions. These are usually not governments. They are individuals and institutions that are trying to harm Israel by boycotting any kind of business there.

This anti-Israel activity is shameful. Those who promote it should be penalized. If they want to find out what it is like to not be able to trade, we should show them what it is like not to be able to trade. There are 26 States that have already passed legislation that allows them to deal in different ways with people who have either disinvested in or boycotted Israel. This bill provides some further definition of how they can move forward. Boycotting Israel is unacceptable. That is an important part of this package.

All of these things need to be done, and this is an important time to send that message around the world—that not only our allies inside world can count on us but that our enemies in the world—our adversaries—can also ex-

pect us to do what we should do to support our allies, to defend freedom, to look forward as one amendment that has been offered will do that I have cosponsored to meet our commitments to NATO, to understand the continued dangerous nature of terrorist threats, to be thoughtful as we make decisions that move us further away from the safe havens that those threats have used in the past. This is an important time for us to send the very message that this bill and the proposed amendment do send. I look forward to seeing that message sent first by the Senate and then by the House, with then, hopefully, a signature from the President of the United States.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Wyoming.

Mr. BARRASSO. Mr. President, first, I associate myself with the remarks that we just heard from the distinguished Senator from Missouri, who made some wonderful points about how important the bill that we are discussing on the floor continues to be. I appreciate his remarks and his leadership in this body.

#### GOVERNMENT FUNDING

Mr. President, I come to the floor to discuss a different topic, which is that the government has reopened for 3 weeks. It is welcome news that President Trump has signed the stopgap funding measure and has fully paid furloughed Federal workers.

There was an important workforce story that, I believe, was lost over the last couple of weeks during the shutdown—the story about the great news of the American economy. I certainly feel it at home. I know the Presiding Officer does in Utah, as do others, as we head home and see the “help wanted” signs that are up and the people who are looking to hire more people.

This economy continues to fire on all cylinders. It is fueled, certainly, in part by what Republicans have been able to accomplish due to our policy, which is a pro-job policy of tax cuts and regulatory relief. Since the tax cut law that was signed a year ago, this economy has created 2.6 million American jobs in the last year. There is additional good news. I hear it in Wyoming, I heard it last weekend, and I expect to hear it this weekend. Americans are seeing that there is actually more money in their paychecks. There is more money for a couple of reasons. One is that wages are up, and the other is that taxes are down. Last month, there was a 3.2-percent year-over-year increase in average hourly wages. It matched October as the biggest increase since 2009. This wage increase was even stronger for production workers and non-managers, who saw an additional increase in year-over-year growth.

The economy is working well. It is producing more jobs. For 9 straight months now, there have been more available jobs in this country than individuals looking for work. Last week,

we saw jobless claims drop to the lowest level since November of 1969—1969, the year we put a man on the Moon and the year of Woodstock. That was 50 years ago. It was the lowest since then. That is half a century.

Now that this partial shutdown is over, I believe we need to refocus our attention on continuing to grow the economy, continuing to increase wages, and continuing to create more high-paying jobs for American workers. Meanwhile, Democrats seem to want to put the brakes on the economy. They are proposing higher taxes and expansive new regulations.

We still have our work cut out for us. This excellent economic news underscores the need for us to work together to resolve our differences on important government funding legislation. Let's keep in mind that 70 percent of the government is already funded all the way through the end of the fiscal year. Congress still has the job to do of funding the remaining 25 percent, and we need to do that by the middle of February—by February 15.

By signing the 3-week continuing resolution, the President has given Congress the opportunity to come together to secure the southern border and to fund the government. During the shutdown standoff, Democrats repeatedly called for the President to reopen the government. They asked for 3 weeks so they could seriously negotiate, they say, on border security. Well, we now have a 3-week agreement, but time is going to tell whether Democrats are serious about solving this border security crisis and protecting the American people.

A full-year spending deal has to include significant funding for a comprehensive border security package. We need more personnel, we need more technology, and we need more physical barriers.

Security barriers are not the sole solution, but they are an essential part of the solution. That is why the last four Presidents built 650 miles of physical barriers along our 2,000-mile border with Mexico. Democrats, including Speaker PELOSI, voted for all this construction. In fact, the Speaker's home State of California has a physical barrier on the border with Tijuana, Mexico.

Like his four predecessors, President Trump has listened to the security experts. Those four were President Obama, President Clinton, President George W. Bush, and President George Herbert Walker Bush. Four Presidents prior to President Trump listened to the experts.

The experts today say we need 200 more miles of physical barriers strategically located where illegal traffic is surging. Despite the experts' support, Democrats have abruptly changed their position on barriers—changed completely—and they have denied the President the funding he has requested.

Given that Democrats had supported 650 miles of the physical barriers we

currently have, why are they opposing the next 200 miles, strategically placed where illegal traffic is surging? To me, it seems personal, and it seems aimed at President Trump. The American people expect us to solve problems not as Democrats and Republicans but as elected representatives of the people.

The priority is to move full-year Homeland Security Department spending legislation through Congress that provides wall funding. Today, House-Senate negotiators are working to produce a compromise package that can pass with the other six bills and get it done by February 15. This conference committee—a committee of the two Houses—will be meeting later today. Conferees may also add other provisions, including immigration reforms.

Already, the President has offered to extend protections for the Dreamers, who were brought here as children, and immigrants whose temporary visas are expiring. So the President has offered an opportunity and a solution. These modest proposals are an immigration policy bandaid. Yet they could be the start of broader bipartisan immigration talks. From a policy perspective, I believe we are not that far apart.

Americans agree that border security is important and that our immigration system does need reform. The country's safety and security must always come first.

In my opinion, the President is open to reasonable changes to his plan. I believe he has been very willing to compromise. As long as Democrats define victory as blocking President Trump, however, on his key priority, everyone loses, and that includes Federal workers, the American people, and immigrants.

The American people expect us to work together to resolve our differences. This isn't a winner-take-all political game. It never should be. Members of both parties must be flexible. Once Congress passes a full-year spending bill, we can move on to other priorities facing us as a nation.

President Trump has incredible determination to build physical barriers where Border Patrol tells us they are most needed, and the President is right when he says walls work. Democrats supported construction before President Trump took office; they should support it now. The President has presented a path to compromise. Now Democrats should follow suit. All we need to succeed is cooperation. The best position on this negotiation highway is the middle lane. It is time to move to the middle and move forward on border security. By working together, we can produce a winning solution for America.

I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. ROMNEY). The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. THUNE. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. PERDUE). Without objection, it is so ordered.

#### ECONOMIC GROWTH

Mr. THUNE. Mr. President, Republicans started out the last Congress with one goal, and that is to make life better for American families.

After years of economic stagnation in the Obama administration, too many families were struggling, wages were stagnant, and opportunities were few and far between. Republicans were determined to change that. We knew American workers and American businesses were as driven, creative, and innovative as ever. We also knew we were facing a lot of obstacles, including burdensome regulations and an outdated tax code that acted as a drag on economic growth. So we took action.

We eliminated excessive regulations. We undertook historic reform of our tax bill to put more money in Americans' pockets and get our economy going again. The Tax Code may not be the first thing people think of when they think about economic growth, but it is actually one of the key factors that determine how well our economy functions. The Tax Code can encourage growth and job creation or it can make it difficult for businesses to even operate, much less grow and create jobs.

Prior to the passage of the Tax Cuts and Jobs Act, our Tax Code was not helping our economy. Large and small businesses were weighed down by high tax rates and growth-killing tax provisions and all the regulatory and compliance burdens that came along with it. Our outdated international tax rules left America's global businesses at a competitive disadvantage in the global economy. That had real consequences for American workers.

A small business owner struggling to afford the annual tax bill for her business was highly unlikely to be able to hire a new worker or raise wages. A larger business struggling to stay competitive in the global marketplace, while paying substantially higher tax rates than its foreign competitors, too often had limited funds to expand or increase investment in the United States.

In December of 2017, after months of work, we passed a comprehensive reform of our Nation's Tax Code. We took action to put more money in American families' pockets immediately by cutting tax rates, doubling the child tax credit, and nearly doubling the standard deduction. Then we focused on improving the playing field for American workers by improving the playing field for businesses. We lowered tax rates across the board for owners of small- and medium-sized businesses, farms, and ranches. We lowered our Nation's massive corporate tax rate, which up until January 1, was the highest corporate tax rate in the developed world. We expanded business owners' ability to recover the cost of investments they make in their businesses, which frees up cash they can reinvest in their oper-

ations and in their workers. We brought the U.S. international tax system into the 21st century so American businesses are not operating at a competitive disadvantage next to their foreign counterparts.

Now we are seeing the results. Our economy is thriving. The economy grew at a robust 3.4 percent in the third quarter of 2018. There were 312,000 jobs created in December, and more than 2.6 million jobs have been created since tax reform was signed into law. In 2018, we saw the most impressive job growth in the manufacturing sector since 1997, and 2018 also saw 19 States reach record-low unemployment rates. This month, initial jobless claims dropped below 200,000 for the first time since 1969.

In 2018, for the first time ever, the number of job openings outnumbered the number of job seekers. The Department of Labor reports that for 9 straight months, there have been more job openings than people looking for work. Think about that. There were more job openings than people looking for work for 9 straight months. Wage growth has accelerated, which was stagnant for so many years in the previous administration. Wages are now currently growing at the fastest rate since 2009. Small businesses had a record optimism in 2018, and the list goes on.

In human terms, this means job seekers are finding it easier to find jobs—and not just any job but jobs they actually want. Fewer families are having to choose between repairing the car or paying for a child's braces; more individuals are able to put money away for their retirement; more families can afford to take that family vacation or to put money away for their kids' college.

I am proud the work we have done is making life better for American families. Republicans are going to continue working to expand operations for Americans even further, and I hope our colleagues on the Democratic side of the aisle will work with us in order to make that happen.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Nebraska.

#### MILITARY READINESS

Mrs. FISCHER. Mr. President, I rise to address the state of our military readiness. We live in an uncertain world, one that is perhaps more unstable than at any time since the end of the Cold War.

As Russia increases its belligerence abroad and China invests millions in a systemic effort to undermine us, we find ourselves confronted by strategic competitors in new and in dangerous ways.

For decades, violent extremism was our No. 1 security challenge. While the threat from global terrorism remains a priority, the United States and our ideals are now being challenged by nations seeking to reshape the globe according to their own design. This is a design that does not include the respect for freedom and democracy that

we so deeply cherish. We must not stand idly by and let the rising tide of totalitarianism and autocracy sweep away the free global order that America and her allies have fought so hard to establish and to preserve. As Americans, it is up to us to meet these challenges head-on. That effort begins in the Senate.

Every Member of this body took an oath of office to support and defend the Constitution. There is no greater service to that oath and to the people we represent than to ensure the defense of the Nation. That is why, in the 116th Congress, we must build on past efforts and continue to make the necessary investments to our military. Doing so will maintain the safety and security of our Nation for decades to come.

As a senior member of the Senate Armed Services Committee, I have become deeply familiar with the warnings that senior leaders at the Department of Defense have been delivering for years. They warn of shortfalls in munitions, soldiers who are short on training, pilots without adequate time in the cockpit, and facilities that are crumbling from underfunding and neglect. Yet, in politically charged times, that message sometimes gets muffled against the backdrop of other debates.

I am concerned that some may not appreciate how serious the issue of readiness has become. While we took a significant step forward with the funding that was authorized in last year's National Defense Authorization Act, we cannot fix this issue in just a single year. The depth of the problem is reflected in the very metrics that the services use to measure their ability to fight.

For my colleagues who may be skeptical about the need to make these investments in our military, I would point to the following facts.

In the U.S. Army, the world's most distinguished ground fighting force, only 50 percent of brigade combat teams are fully trained—50 percent.

In the Navy, which protects our Nation against threats around the globe and defends free commerce on the world's oceans, only 30 percent of ship maintenance has been completed on time since fiscal year 2012. Because of this, ships have been unavailable for training and operations for thousands of days. This has made the already significant workload placed on sailors even worse, and it has increased its risk of a catastrophic mishap.

In the Marine Corps—a critical expeditionary force that is essential for 21st century combat—limitations that have been imposed by reduced training hours and a fleet of amphibious ships that have been cut in half since 1990 have impacted its ability to fight a major conflict.

In the Air Force, there are 30 percent fewer airmen and 39 percent fewer aircraft today than during Desert Storm. With an average fleet age of 28 years, our airmen have a tall task of defending against a range of cutting-edge threats.

Across all services, the physical infrastructure, which comprises everything from soldiers' barracks to runways, has become badly dilapidated. An average of one in four military facilities receives a poor or a failing grade.

This is unacceptable not simply because it means we may not be prepared to defend ourselves should we need to fight against a nation that seeks to harm us but because it is our frontline soldiers, sailors, airmen, and marines who suffer the consequences when we do not address readiness. Tragically, it is our men and women in uniform, who serve day in and day out—on holidays and at home and abroad—who are put at risk if we do not make the collective decision in this body to support our military by providing them with the necessary funding. These are problems we can fix, but it is going to require us to work together to find common ground so as to ensure that America's military remains the most capable and professional force the world has ever known.

As we debate today in the U.S. Senate, hundreds of America's sons and daughters are standing the watch on every continent while protecting and defending our way of life. They are stationed across oceans, in arid deserts, in dense jungles, and here at home. No matter what happens, we know that they are serving faithfully, each and every day, to safeguard our liberty and our freedom.

It is time for us to show them that they are not alone and that the U.S. Senate has their backs. Let's keep working together so that this year will be remembered as one in which, despite our other differences, we will have agreed on this—that our men and women in uniform should have the resources they need to fulfill their mission and that we will continue to provide for a strong defense of the United States of America.

I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. PORTMAN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

#### GOVERNMENT FUNDING

Mr. PORTMAN. Mr. President, as most people are painfully aware, we just went through a 35-day government shutdown. It didn't work for anybody. I am here today to talk about a very simple way to keep these shutdowns from happening in the future. I am also here to talk a little bit about how it fits into the broader discussion we are having.

What I am not suggesting is that we somehow leave the border security issue aside. It is a very important issue. We have to address it. The President has presented a reasonable plan. His plan is, actually, to rely on the ex-

perts to determine what kind of barriers ought to be along the border. His funding of \$5.7 billion that he talks about for these barriers is to fund exactly the top 10 priorities of what the experts are saying, which are within the Customs and Border Protection's "Border Security Improvement Plan."

Along with many other things, I think that makes sense. A structure alone—a barrier alone—is not enough. You have to have cameras. You have to have ways to see who is coming, and you have to have ways to respond to it. You have to have more Border Patrol, and you have to have more technology. He also has more drones in his proposal. He has screening at the ports of entry to be able to stop some of these drugs from coming into our communities—the cocaine, the crystal meth, and the heroin, most of which are coming from Mexico.

I think it is a good plan. I think we should provide him help on this plan. We have a true crisis at the border, no matter how you measure it—whether it is in terms of the drugs, whether it is in terms of people coming over, or whether it is in terms of the human trafficking that is occurring, according to the experts. Let's do it the right way. Let's do it through experts. Let's not do it because the politicians say it is the right thing to do; let's do it because the experts on the border say it is the right thing to do. Let's put the right kind of barriers in the right kind of place. That is what I see in the President's plan.

He is also talking about working with Democrats on some immigration priorities they have had over the years. For the last 10 years, there have been Democrats who have talked about these young people who came here as children through no fault of their own. The President has said he would like to give them more certainty as part of this plan. Let's take him up on that. Why would we miss this opportunity? It is a good idea. It is the right thing from a policy perspective. By providing that kind of help to those DACA recipients—those young people who are now working, who are in school, and who are in our military—I think we can actually also get some Democrats to be helpful, to provide more border security at the same time we are helping those who are here and who are deserving of that help.

The President has also proposed to help people who come from 10 different countries around the world stay here with some certainty for another few years. These are people who are in the so-called TPS program, the temporary protected status program, people from 10 countries where there is war, famine, and natural disasters, and you don't want to send those people back. They are working on that and working on getting them work authorizations. That is what this is about. A lot of employers here are eager for them to stay so they can continue to work for some period of time. So there would be some



security for those individuals, tens of thousands of whom live in States where there are two Democratic Senators, States such as Maryland and Virginia. Those Senators have been stalwarts and advocates for making sure there is more certainty for these individuals. It seems to me we have a good combination here. Let's get it done.

The conferees are talking right now, but in the meantime, let's not go back to a government shutdown. That is not going to help us get to a solution. In fact, I would argue that is not only not leverage on behalf of the President or any of us, it actually works the other way because when the government shuts down, everybody loses.

I am hearing from Senators on both sides of the aisle who say they are fed up with these shutdowns. There is now a building bipartisan consensus that we need to end government shutdowns. I am encouraged because I am also hearing from people around the country about this. There is a bipartisan consensus among individuals about it.

There is an interesting poll out today that will give you a sense of this. People were given three options. They were asked: What if these talks break down? Which one of these three things should we do: shut down the government again; turn to a national emergency, as the President has been talking about, as a possible option; or not do either of those first two but, rather, do the default, which is to have a continuing resolution and let the spending from last year continue? Guess what. Only 9 percent of those polled wanted another government shutdown. Ninety-one percent said: No, let's not go back there. I call that a consensus. I think it is time for us to take action here in the Congress to say: Let's stop this.

By the way, people feel this way because they get it. They know that these shutdowns are a hardship for Federal employees who are furloughed or who are forced to go to work without being paid. They are a hardship for small businesses that can't get government work paid for—work they have done. They are a hardship for taxpayers who want good taxpayer services, such as having the national parks open or having food inspections or having the IRS hotline open, which we as taxpayers pay for.

Of course, I heard from a lot of constituents in Ohio during the last 35 days.

I heard from a TSA officer in Cincinnati who, like most people I represent, lives paycheck to paycheck. He told me he could not sleep at night. Why? Because he had never missed a mortgage payment, and he had to miss one because he lost two paychecks.

I heard about a butcher shop in Cleveland, OH. I actually went to visit it. It is a new butcher shop that just opened. It has an interesting mission. It is a deli and a butcher shop in a low-income neighborhood. They want to provide fresh, relatively inexpensive

but quality and healthy food for this neighborhood. It is needed. It is one of these areas where you hear there is a food desert. In some areas, particularly in inner cities, sometimes there is just not good, healthy food anywhere. Well, this little butcher shop was excited about offering it, but guess what. Because of the shutdown, they couldn't get the required Federal permission to accept food stamps. So they had their opening, and everything was great, but they couldn't complete their mission. Their mission was to help these people have better food.

I heard from others as well. I heard from our Federal prosecutors in Ohio. I do a lot of work in trying to push back against the opioid issue, the heroin and the fentanyl, and the fact that we have these drug rings in Ohio and elsewhere that are causing so much harm. These prosecutors said they couldn't pursue these cases. One said: We can't pay informants during the shutdown. Think about that. We are slowing down our prosecution of human trafficking, opioids, rape, and so many horrible issues we want to address. We can't do it during a shutdown as effectively because the funds aren't there to pursue these investigations.

I heard from Ohio craft beer breweries. These are small businesses in Ohio. I am told there have been about 65 new ones in the last couple of years in Ohio. It is a big deal. It is probably in your State too. These are great businesses. They have not been able to expand over the last several weeks during this 35-day shutdown or to introduce new products, which is absolutely essential to their revenue stream. They come out every season with a new product in order to continue to get folks to drink these craft beers, but they need a permit from the Federal Government to do that, so they couldn't introduce their new products.

By the way, I talked to one of them today. We have been trying to help them, and they told me they still can't get the necessary Federal permits and licenses to do this. Why? Because the Federal Government office is so backed up because of the shutdown. So here we are almost a week after the shutdown, but we are really still shut down for the purposes of these small businesses.

I have heard from the young men and women of the U.S. Coast Guard. In Ohio, we have Lake Erie, we have Coast Guard stations, and we have a lot of great patriots who have been struggling financially as they worked for no pay. By the way, they were determined to do their duty, and I applaud their patriotism.

I applaud the patriotism of all of the Federal workers who showed up without getting paid and did their duty and were proud to do their duty. A lot of these folks missed two paychecks, but they didn't miss a beat, and we appreciate them.

In addition to the impact this shutdown has had on those Federal employees and their families, it has also had a

real impact on our economy. We should pay attention to that.

The Congressional Budget Office just released a report on Monday estimating the economic impacts the shutdown had on our economy. Remember, this was just a partial shutdown. Most of the funding for defense, as an example, we had appropriated, but for 25 percent of it, we had not.

This is what happens: When paychecks don't flow into the economy, when furloughed Federal workers can't perform needed services and are paid after the fact anyway, and when there are sudden disruptions for Federal contractors and other businesses that rely on timely payment from these Agencies, it has a real impact, and taxpayers are worse off.

CBO estimated that the partial shutdown reduced GDP by \$11 billion in the near term, \$8 billion in the first quarter of this year, and \$3 billion in the fourth quarter of 2018. Fortunately, the Agency expects an offsetting increase in economic activity now that the government has reopened and Federal employees are receiving backpay, but over the long term, CBO estimates that \$3 billion will never be recovered in our economy. So it has an economic impact on all of us, and that goes for jobs, wages, and economic growth.

Some of that economic impact, of course, also means less revenue. Is it significant in terms of the overall revenue for our government? Some would say no, but it is less tax revenue to the Federal Government.

The aviation industry was hit particularly hard by the shutdown. The FAA was subject to the shutdown, and many of my constituents expressed concerns about aviation safety. We heard about the long delays at some of the airports. That has an economic impact.

I will tell you that airlines, such as Delta Airlines and Southwest Airlines, reported that they lost tens of millions of dollars in revenue in January. So this is over and above the CBO estimate I was talking about. Delta lost about \$25 million. Southwest lost between \$10 and \$15 million. These lost earnings have decreased Federal tax revenues, of course, to the government. CBO didn't put a price on that, but, in fact, it is even worse than CBO estimates because of the budgetary impacts that lead to some of these revenue impacts as well.

The bottom line is that the lower economic growth and the disruptions for Federal employees ultimately cost taxpayers more than if Congress had just passed these appropriations bills on time and we hadn't gotten into this shutdown.

It doesn't have to be this way. Again, that is why I am working to ensure we don't go there again. In every Congress for the last five Congresses since I was elected in 2010, I have introduced legislation called the End Government Shutdowns Act. I was involved with this when I was on the House side

under President Bush, and now I am involved with it here because I think these shutdowns make no sense. I have introduced it under Republican and Democratic Presidents. I have introduced it under Republican and Democratic control of the House and the Senate. So this is not a political issue to me; this is a good-government issue.

The bill is a very simple, common-sense step that would continue funding from the previous year for any appropriations bill that is not done, and when there is a continuing resolution, as there is now, whenever that continuing resolution expires, we would just continue the funding from the previous year. Some have called that an auto CR. Instead of shutting down, at least the government would continue to operate.

A CR is not the ultimate answer. What we really want to do is to get this place—Congress—to actually do its work and to pass the individual appropriations bills. That is how you reform government. That is how you ensure there is certainty and predictability, particularly at the Department of Defense, where they worry a lot about that.

My bill also says that after the first 120 days—4 months—there will be a 1-percent across-the-board reduction in spending to get people to the table so that appropriators who like to spend money actually have some incentive to not just continue the CR. I think that is important. We would then reduce it by 1 percent every 90 days thereafter if Congress doesn't get its act together and put these bills together.

I think this will help to not just stop shutdowns but also to keep us from having perpetual continuing resolutions. Only through passing these individual bills can we do our constitutional duty—and it is our duty.

By the way, some Democrats have said they are not wowed by the 1 percent across the board after 4 months. They have said that somehow Republicans would like that better than they would. I just don't agree with that. I will tell you, 53 percent of the spending in this category is defense spending. It is not security spending, which is more than that, but 53 percent of it—more than half—is defense spending. It is Republicans on this side of the aisle who talk about this every year, and we have accomplished increasing defense spending. We are not going to want to cut defense spending.

By the same token, some on the other side will feel strongly about their priorities, and some of us have other priorities as well. We all have priorities. This is not meant to be an uneven balance; it is meant to be fair—1 percent across the board for everything.

My hope is that we can pass this legislation. We now have 28 cosponsors in the Senate. More than half of the Republicans are on this bill. We have the opportunity to actually move this forward, I hope, in this current negotia-

tion over the border I talked about and over the immigration policies I talked about. Let's do it.

On the other side of the Capitol, my friend TROY BALDERSON, a Republican Representative from Ohio, and a Democrat, JEFF VAN DREW from New Jersey, have introduced this bill. They introduced it last week, so now we have a companion bill that is bipartisan in the House as well.

You have heard Speaker PELOSI say she is against shutdowns. You have heard CHUCK SCHUMER, who is the leader over here for the Democrats, say he is against shutdowns. You have heard a lot of our leadership say they are against shutdowns. Well, this might be something we can actually get together on and do something about.

My hope is that we can move forward. We hope we can put a common-sense bill in place that doesn't allow us to fall back into another one of these painful government shutdowns. They are not good for anybody.

Let's forge a bipartisan agreement on this funding. We are not that far apart, as I said earlier. Let's be sure we have border security. Let's deal with some of these lingering immigration issues where the President has extended the olive branch. Let's do something good for the people we represent, but at the same time, let's find a will to include in this package legislation that ends these government shutdowns while what happened these last several weeks is still fresh in our minds. Having gone through this bitter experience of the longest shutdown in history, let's be sure we don't let people down. Instead, let's make sure we do not let this moment pass and indeed stop these government shutdowns once and for all.

I yield back my time.

THE PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Louisiana.

UNANIMOUS CONSENT REQUEST—AMENDMENT  
NO. 65

Mr. KENNEDY. Mr. President, as you know, today, or very shortly, the Senate is going to be taking up S. 1, called the Strengthen America's Security in the Middle East Act.

Through the Chair, I would say, S. 1 is being offered by Senator MARCO RUBIO, the senior Senator from Florida. He is, as we also know, whip smart, and Senator RUBIO has forgotten more about foreign policy than I will ever know. I have enormous respect for him, and nothing I say today is meant to criticize his extraordinary efforts on this bill, much of which I have supported and will continue to support, but there is a deficiency in S. 1. We can do better by filling that hole.

Once again, Congress is paying lip service to protecting our allies in the Middle East. We are calling this bill a protector of our allies in the Middle East, and in large part it is, with a major exception—because, once again, the U.S. Senate is leaving behind our friends and allies, the Kurds.

It is not the first time the Kurds have been left behind. The Kurds were

left behind when the Ottoman Empire collapsed, and they remained a stateless people. The Kurds were left behind as modern states grew up around them, in Syria, Iran, Iraq, and Turkey, where they had no political representation, where the Kurds had no future besides oppression. The Kurds were left behind again in 2011, when allied troops pulled out of Iraq, and ISIS was just beginning to emerge. It is time we break that pattern, once and for all, and the Senate can do it in Senator RUBIO's stellar effort in the form of S. 1.

As I said, S. 1 does some really good things. I thank Senator RUBIO. It will reaffirm our commitment to protecting Israel, certainly our closest friend in the region, maybe our best friend in the world. Sometimes I think Israel is our only friend in the world. S. 1 will strengthen our bond with Jordan, another key ally in fighting terrorism and the humanitarian catastrophe caused by the Syrian refugee crisis. It will combat a radical economic warfare campaign against Israel. Let me say that again because it is important. S. 1 will combat a radical economic warfare campaign against Israel. I support that unconditionally. S. 1 will create new sanctions on the Government of Syria that targets those who have been laundering money to help the Assad regime.

I support all of those things, but with all the respect I can muster, I say, gently, it is a lie. It is a lie for anyone to say that S. 1 protects all of our allies in the Middle East because it will not. S. 1 makes no mention of our Kurdish allies at all. I have an amendment pending—I have offered an amendment, rather, that would fix that.

There are 30 million Kurds in the Middle East. They don't have a state, they don't have a country to call their own. They are not really safe anywhere. As a result, the Kurdish people have suffered tremendously throughout history. They have been subjected to discrimination, massacres, forced relocation, and countless other human rights violations.

Saddam Hussein attacked more than 4,000—4,000 Kurdish villages—not people, Kurdish villages—with poison gas and other chemical weapons during the Iran-Iraq war. One hundred eighty thousand people died. They were murdered. Many more were tortured. Even more were imprisoned. Thousands fled, not that they had anywhere to go.

In the 1990s, Turkish soldiers made a hobby out of burning down Kurdish villages. Since 1984, more than 40,000 Turkish Kurds have been killed. They still face oppression today in nearly every country they inhabit. The Turkish Defense Minister made that clear in December, when he said that when the time comes, the Kurds “will be buried in the ditches they dug. No one should doubt this.” That is a quote.

Through all this incomprehensible suffering, the Kurds have stood by America, and we have stood by them through the decades, through thick and



through thin. The Kurds have been instrumental at every phase of U.S. engagement in Iraq and Syria, every phase.

Going back to the 2003 invasion, Kurdish fighters have been crucial boots on the ground in the fight against Islamic tyranny, and that is just a fact. The parts of Iraq retaken and controlled by the Kurds were strongholds for Western values like democracy and capitalism and multiculturalism. In fact, when allied forces withdrew in 2011, not a single U.S. soldier had lost his or her life in Kurdish territory.

The Kurdish-led Syrian Democratic Forces, better known as the SDF, have been another set of boots on the ground in the fight against ISIS. With the help of coalition supplies, weapons, and airstrikes, the SDF recaptured large parts of Northern and Eastern Syria from ISIS's iron grip.

Four years ago, the Presiding Officer will recall, there were 100,000 ISIS soldiers. Thanks in large part to our Kurdish allies, those numbers today are 5,000. Today, ISIS has surrendered 99 percent of its territory, including its capital in Raqqa. The so-called caliphate fighters are now being held to a small sliver of territory on the eastern border with Iraq near the Euphrates River. Our Kurdish allies deserve much of the credit for these successes.

It is plain to see that the Syrian Kurds have been invaluable in America's fight against jihadists and tyrants in the Middle East. The SDF, Syrian Kurds, controls nearly one-quarter of Syria right now. That is land that doesn't belong to ISIS; that is land that doesn't belong to Assad, a butcher; that is land that doesn't belong to Russia; and that is land that doesn't belong to Iran. More importantly, it is land where the Syrian Kurds know they will be free from persecution and from slaughter.

For a while now, I have been asking my colleagues in the Senate to support my amendment to S. 1. My amendment would promote stability and security for our close friends in the Middle East because it is the right thing to do. It is the moral thing to do, and America's foreign policy has always had a moral component.

My amendment will allow the United States to defend the Kurds in Syria by giving the President—not requiring the President to do anything. It would give the President the authority to use our military as he deems fit to keep our promise and to protect our allies—and all of our allies. After all, the Kurds have contributed to the fight against ISIS, and we owe them some peace of mind as we draw down our presence in the region. As we draw down our presence in the region, it is time to stand up and stand by our friends to make sure the fight stays won.

The threat of U.S. military force has been a major deterrent for the reemergence of jihadists like ISIS and al-Qaida. As the Presiding Officer knows

well, weakness invites in wolves. Our presence has held back Assad, it has held back Turkey, it has held back Russia, and it has held back Iran from gaining stronger footholds in the area. Without assurances of our support, as we wind down our effort in Syria, the Kurds will be left behind to fend for themselves. Without the Kurds, we cannot be certain who will step in to fill the power vacuum in the areas of Syria they currently control. We can only guess, and the answers to those guesses don't look good.

If the Kurds are vulnerable to attack from Turkey or Syrian rebels, they might have to turn to their enemies for protection out of fear. Even if they don't, they can't fight off the Turkish military if the Turkish military decides to attack and pursue the remnants of ISIS at the same time.

To abandon the Kurds now would be unconscionable. To abandon the Kurds now would compromise the security of our allies, Israel and Jordan, and it would risk exposing the region to more turmoil.

I urge my colleagues in the Senate to think about the Kurds as they consider how best we can strengthen America's interests and security in the Middle East. It is time we make sure America keeps the promises we made to all of our allies—not just some of our allies, all of our allies—in the Middle East.

Mr. KENNEDY. Toward that end, I hereby offer a second amendment that I am sending to the desk. This second-degree amendment will amend amendment No. 65 proposed by Senator McCONNELL. I ask that the amendment be read.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is the Senator offering the amendment?

Mr. KENNEDY. I am.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. That requires unanimous consent because the Senate is in a period of debate only.

Mr. KENNEDY. I hear no objection. May I ask that my amendment be read?

Mr. President, I suggest the absence of a quorum.

Mr. KENNEDY. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. COTTON). Is there objection?

Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. KENNEDY. Afterward, I would ask that my amendment be read.

Now I would again ask for a quorum call.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. KENNEDY. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. KENNEDY. Mr. President, I would like to temporarily withdraw my unanimous consent on my amendment, although I reserve the right to return.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Consent is withdrawn.

The majority leader.

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

#### MORNING BUSINESS

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate be in a period of morning business, with Senators permitted to speak therein for up to 10 minutes each.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

#### 100TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE OFFICE OF THE LEGISLATIVE COUNSEL

Mr. GRASSLEY. Mr. President, this year marks the 100th anniversary of the establishment of the Legislative Drafting Service, which we now know as the Office of the Legislative Counsel. In recognition of the anniversary, I would like to make a few comments about the history of the office.

During the first 130 years of Congress, 1789–1918, legislation for Congress was drafted by Members of Congress, congressional staff, Executive agencies, and outside individuals and groups which sometimes led to legislation that was not always clear, consistent, organized, and well written.

In 1911, Columbia University established a Legislative Drafting Research Fund to conduct research and work toward the better drafting of statutes and sent Professor Middleton Beaman and Thomas Parkinson to Congress to demonstrate the feasibility and value of the use by Congress of a full-time staff of professional legislative drafters.

The positive experiences of committees, Members, and staff of Congress, including the Ways and Means Committee of the House of Representatives, in working with professional legislative drafters led to the introduction and consideration of legislation to establish a Legislative Drafting Bureau, including S. 1240, 63rd Congress, which was reported to the Senate on June 17, 1913.

During the debate on the establishment of a Legislative Drafting Bureau, Senator Elihu Root of New York argued in favor of establishment citing the use of counsel by the British House of Commons and stating that “[t]he fundamental idea . . . to give the benefit of a trained, experienced student in the preparation of bills. . . . We need trained and intelligent assistance in the drafting of laws.”

On February 24, 1919, Congress enacted section 1303 of the Revenue Act

of 1918, 2 U.S.C. 271 et seq., which established the Legislative Drafting Service.

The House of Representatives and the Senate were initially served by a single office with two branches that received a single appropriation that was equally divided and transferred employees between the branches to meet special needs.

The two individuals who carried out the demonstration by the Legislative Drafting Research Fund became the first Legislative Counsels of the Legislative Drafting Service with Middleton Beaman appointed in February 1919 as the first Legislative Counsel of the House of Representatives branch of the Service and Thomas Parkinson appointed in March 1919 as the first Legislative Counsel of the Senate branch of the Service.

In 1924, the name of the office was changed from the Legislative Drafting Service to the Office of the Legislative Counsel.

The House of Representatives and the Senate branches of the Office of the Legislative Counsel began to evolve separately during the 1930s when the Senate branch, while continuing to meet the drafting needs of Senate committees, began to devote a significant part of the resources of the Office to the drafting requests of individual Senators while the House branch continued to limit the services of the branch to committees of the House.

The House of Representatives and the Senate branches of the Office continued to separate in 1958 when, for the first time, the two branches received separate and not equal appropriations and were officially separated in 1970 when a separate charter was established for the Office of the Legislative Counsel of the House by title V of the Legislative Reorganization Act of 1970, 2 U.S.C. 281 et seq.

The first attorneys joined the Office to work only for a session or on a particular project and then moved on to other positions, with Thomas Parkinson, the first Legislative Counsel of the Senate, and John E. Walker, the successor of Parkinson, each serving fewer than 2 years and Frederic P. Lee, the third Legislative Counsel of the Senate, being the first to serve a substantial term of about 8 years.

The career tradition of the Office of the Legislative Counsel of the Senate was established with successors to Frederic P. Lee who served the Senate in the Office for their careers or long periods of employment, including Charles Boots—1922–1961, 32 years; Henry Wood—1926–1943, 17 years; Stephen Rice—1933–1950, 17 years; John Simms—1936–1966, 30 years; Dwight Pinion—1942–1969, 27 years; John Herberg—1947–1971, 24 years; Harry Littell—1947–1980, 33 years; Douglas Hester—1952–1990, 38 years; Francis Burk—1970–1998, 28 years; James Fransen—1975–2014, 39 years; Gary Endicott—1981–2018, 38 years; and Bill Baird—2010–present, 33 years, who served as attorneys of the Office and Legislative Counsels of the Senate.

During the 100-year history of the Office, the Office of the Legislative Counsel of the Senate has served the Senate well by providing a steady, reliable source of nonpartisan and nonpolitical professionally drafted legislation for committees, Members, and staff.

The attorneys and staff members of the Office have established and maintained traditions of professionalism and dedication that have helped to provide to the Senate a sense of continuity and institutional memory.

There has been a dramatic growth in the use of the Office by the Senate where, during the 66th and 67th Congresses—1919–1923—704 requests were drafted by three attorneys for an average of 117 drafts per attorney for both Congresses, to the most recently ended 115th Congress—2017–2018—where 72,106 requests were drafted by 37 attorneys for an average of 1,948 drafts per attorney for that Congress.

To deal with its increasing workload, in 1990, the Office established teams with multiple attorneys per team that were responsible for drafting legislation under the jurisdiction of one or more Senate committees which has provided the Office with the flexibility and resources to respond to and meet the growing demands placed on the Office for ever-changing areas and complexity of active legislation.

Attorneys in the Office and the House Legislative Counsel's Office use a uniform drafting style to improve the quality and consistency of Federal legislation and Federal law, including whenever practicable plain English, brevity, consistent organization and terms, and captions and subdivisions to organize drafts and make the drafts more readable and improve the administration and interpretation of and compliance with laws enacted by Congress.

After the anthrax attacks on the Senate in October 2001, the Office of the Legislative Counsel of the Senate continued to draft legislation for the Senate by working in temporary facilities outside the Office while the Dirksen Senate Office Building was decontaminated for 1 month and has since developed an effective long-term capability to deal with emergencies, reflecting the can-do attitude of the Office.

The role of the Office in the legislative work of the Senate is not often acknowledged, but it is understood and appreciated by all Senators.

The 262 current and former employees of the Office have worked very hard over its first 100 years to provide consistently a high quantity of high-quality legislation for the committees, Members, and staff of the Senate.

As the Office of the Legislative Counsel of the Senate celebrates its 100th anniversary, the Office is well prepared to continue to provide the Senate and its committees and officers quality drafting service and sound legal advice with the spirit of quiet professionalism that has been the tradition of the Office throughout its history.

I know that all Senators join me in congratulating the Office of the Legislative Counsel of the Senate on the 100th anniversary of the founding of the Office.

Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that a listing of the men and women of the current staff of the Office of the Legislative Counsel be printed in the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD.

There being no objection, the material was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

Legislative Counsel—William R. Baird; Deputy Legislative Counsel—Elizabeth Alldridge King; Senior Counsels—Charles E. Armstrong, Ruth Ann Ernst, John A. Goetcheus, Heather L. Burnham; Assistant Counsels—Amy E. Gaynor, Matthew D. McGhie, Stephanie Easley, Mark M. McGunagle, Kevin M. Davis, Kristin K. Romero, Heather A. Lowell, Kelly M. Thornburg, John A. Henderson, John W. Baggaley, Margaret A. Rose, Allison M. Otto, Kimberly A. Tamber, Vincent J. Gaiani, Kimberly D. Albrecht-Taylor, Margaret A. Bomba, James L. Ollen-Smith, Robert F. Silver, Thomas B. Heywood, Christina N. Kennelly, Christine E. Miranda, Kathryn G. Bonander, Philip B. Lynch, Deanna E. Edwards, Evan H. Frank, Maureen C. Contreni, Patrick N. Ryan; Staff Attorneys—Carol L. Lewis, Larissa Eltsefon, Mark L. Mazzone; Director of Information Systems—Thomas E. Cole; Office Manager—Donna L. Pasqualino; Senior Staff Assistants—Kimberly R. Bourne-Goldring, Diane E. Nesmeyer, Rebekah J. Musgrove, Patricia H. Olsavsky, Daniela A. Navia.

#### CENTENNIAL OF BEAUMONT INN

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, in Kentucky's oldest town sits a beautiful and historic building on the top of a hill. Beaumont Inn, with its name taken from the French for "beautiful mount," is my State's oldest Southern country inn. The Harrodsburg establishment is a beacon of hospitality with a distinguished history, and I would like to take a moment to mark the centennial anniversary of this treasured Kentucky landmark.

When the main building of today's Beaumont Inn was constructed around 1845, no one could have perceived the incredible future in store, but then again, the location had already had a notable history. An original wooden structure on the site was believed to be the childhood home of John Marshall Harlan, future Kentucky attorney general and Associate Justice of the U.S. Supreme Court.

For many years afterward, the site served as a series of schools for women, including the Greenville Institute, the Daughters College, and finally as Beaumont College until 1916. The next year, the grounds were purchased by an alumna of the Daughters College, Annie Bell Goddard, and her husband Glave. In 1919, the Goddards opened the new 31-room Beaumont Inn, and the same family has proudly operated this wonderful Kentucky establishment ever since.

Throughout the next century, Glave and Annie Bell's descendants have welcomed countless guests to the inn, preserving this historic building, its picturesque scenery, and the tradition of

Southern hospitality. Beaumont Inn grew, both in physical size and in prestige, even earning inclusion onto the National Register of Historic Places. Some of the new buildings include the Greystone House, Bell Cottage, and Goddard Hall, which honors Beaumont's founder. Not only is the inn a charming destination, but it is also a museum filled with interesting artifacts of Kentucky and American history. Today, the inn is operated by the fourth and fifth generation of the Goddard family, Chuck and Helen Dedman and their son, Dixon.

It is beyond question that quality cuisine is a vital aspect of all Southern hospitality. As a pinnacle of a traditional Bluegrass experience, Beaumont Inn sets a high bar. Visitors are drawn to its main dining room by the famous "yellow-legged" fried chicken and 2-year-old Kentucky-cured country ham. The inn's cornmeal batter cakes are a breakfast favorite. In recognition of its culinary excellence, Beaumont Inn has earned some of the highest accolades in this field, including the America's Class Award from the James Beard Foundation. Visitors can also enjoy a Kentucky bourbon at the Owl's Nest lounge or at the Old Owl Tavern, named one of the best bourbon bars in America. As Kentucky leads the Nation in a bourbon revival, the inn has also become an official stop of the Kentucky Bourbon Trail. These amenities reaffirm the strong bonds between this historic institution and one of the Commonwealth's signature industries. In fact, the New York Times published an article about the storied history of Kentucky Owl Bourbon, recently revived by the Dedman family.

I look forward to my next visit to Beaumont Inn, and I would like to thank the Dedman family for their tireless efforts to preserve this Kentucky treasure. Their stewardship of this historic site and long-term vision helps connect our Commonwealth's past to its bright future. As Beaumont Inn celebrates 100 years of excellence, I would like to extend my best wishes to the Dedmans, the staff, and all who enjoy this beloved institution.

#### ARMS SALES NOTIFICATION

Mr. RISCH. Mr. President, section 36(b) of the Arms Export Control Act requires that Congress receive prior notification of certain proposed arms sales as defined by that statute. Upon such notification, the Congress has 30 calendar days during which the sale may be reviewed. The provision stipulates that, in the Senate, the notification of proposed sales shall be sent to the chairman of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee.

In keeping with the committee's intention to see that relevant information is available to the full Senate, I ask unanimous consent to have printed in the RECORD the notifications which have been received. If the cover letter references a classified annex, then such

annex is available to all Senators in the office of the Foreign Relations Committee, room SD-423.

There being no objection, the material was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

#### DEFENSE SECURITY COOPERATION AGENCY, Arlington, VA.

Hon. JAMES E. RISCH,  
*Chairman, Committee on Foreign Relations,  
U.S. Senate, Washington, DC.*

DEAR MR. CHAIRMAN: Pursuant to the reporting requirements of Section 36(b)(1) of the Arms Export Control Act, as amended, we are forwarding herewith Transmittal No. 19-08, concerning the Navy's proposed Letter(s) of Offer and Acceptance to the Government of Japan for defense articles and services estimated to cost \$2.150 billion. After this letter is delivered to your office, we plan to issue a news release to notify the public of this proposed sale.

Sincerely,

CHARLES W. HOOPER,  
*Lieutenant General, USA, Director.*  
Enclosures.

#### TRANSMITTAL NO. 19-08

Notice of Proposed Issuance of Letter of Offer Pursuant to Section 36(b)(1) of the Arms Export Control Act, as amended

(i) Prospective Purchaser: Government of Japan.

(ii) Total Estimated Value:  
Major Defense Equipment\* \$ .375 billion.  
Other \$1.775 billion.

TOTAL \$2.150 billion.

(iii) Description and Quantity or Quantities of Articles or Services under Consideration for Purchase:

Major Defense Equipment (MDE):

Two (2) AEGIS Weapon Systems (AWS).

Two (2) Multi-Mission Signal Processors (MMSP).

Two (2) Command and Control Processor (C2P) Refreshes.

Non-MDE: Also included is radio navigation equipment, naval ordnance, two (2) Identification Friend or Foe (IFF) Systems, Global Command and Control System-Maritime (GCCS-M) hardware, and two (2) Inertial Navigation Systems (INS), U.S. Government and contractor representatives' technical, engineering and logistics support services, installation support material, training, construction services for six (6) vertical launch system launcher module enclosures, communications equipment and associated spares, classified and unclassified publications and software, and other related elements of logistical and program support.

(iv) Military Department: Navy (JA-P-NCO)

(v) Prior Related Cases, if any: None

(vi) Sales Commission, Fee, etc., Paid, Offered, or Agreed to be Paid: None

(vii) Sensitivity of Technology Contained in the Defense Article or Defense Services Proposed to be Sold: See Attached Annex

(viii) Date Report Delivered to Congress: January 29, 2019

\*As defined in Section 47(6) of the Arms Export Control Act.

#### POLICY JUSTIFICATION

##### Japan—AEGIS Weapon System

The Government of Japan has requested to buy two (2) AEGIS Weapon Systems (AWS), two (2) Multi-Mission Signal Processors (MMSP) and two (2) Command and Control Processor (C2P) Refreshes. Also included is radio navigation equipment, naval ordnance, two (2) Identification Friend or Foe (IFF) Systems, Global Command and Control System-Maritime (GCCS-M) hardware, and two (2) Inertial Navigation Systems (INS), U.S.

Government and contractor representatives' technical, engineering and logistics support services, installation support material, training, construction services for six (6) vertical launch system launcher module enclosures, communications equipment and associated spares, classified and unclassified publications and software, and other related elements of logistical and program support. The total estimated program cost is \$2.150 billion.

This proposed sale will contribute to the foreign policy and national security of the United States by improving the security of a major ally that is a force for political stability and economic progress in the Asia-Pacific region. It is vital to U.S. national interests to assist Japan in developing and maintaining a strong and effective self-defense capability.

This proposed sale will provide the Government of Japan with an enhanced capability against increasingly sophisticated ballistic missile threats and create an expanded, layered defense of its homeland. Japan, which already has the AEGIS in its inventory, will have no difficulty absorbing this system into its armed forces.

The proposed sale of this equipment and support does not alter the basic military balance in the region.

The prime contractor for the Aegis Weapon System and Multi-Mission Signal Processors will be Lockheed Martin Rotary and Mission Systems, Washington, DC. The Command and Control Processor Refresh will be provided by General Dynamics, Falls Church, VA.

There are no known offset agreements proposed in connection with this potential sale.

Implementation of this proposed sale will require annual trips to Japan involving U.S. Government and contractor representatives for technical reviews, support, and oversight for approximately eight years.

There will be no adverse impact on U.S. defense readiness as a result of this proposed sale.

#### TRANSMITTAL NO. 19-08

Notice of Proposed Issuance of Letter of Offer Pursuant to Section 36(b)(1) of the Arms Export Control Act

##### Annex Item No. vii

##### (vii) Sensitivity of Technology:

1. The AEGIS Weapon System (AWS) is a multi-mission combat system providing integrated Air and Missile Defense for surface ships. This sale consists of the modified J7 Foreign Military Sales (FMS) baseline (AWS Baseline 9.C2 along with Ballistic Missile Defense (BMD) 5.1 capability). No integrated Anti-Air Warfare capability will be provided. AWS Software, documentation, combat system training and technical services will be provided at the classification levels up to and including SECRET within approved release and disclosure guidelines. The manuals and technical documents are limited to those necessary for operational use and organization maintenance.

2. Hardware includes AWS Computing Infrastructure Equipment, including Blade Processors, Fire Control System (FCS) MK 99, Vertical Launching System (VLS) MK 41, combat system support equipment, logistics support equipment, and the Digital Signal Processing Group. The Digital Signal Processing group will be derived from the Multi-Mission Signal Processor and will be integrated with Lockheed Martin's Solid State Radar (SSR) which is being procured by Japan via Direct Commercial Sale contract. The Digital Signal Processing Group will be capable of BMD mission only. The hardware is UNCLASSIFIED.

3. The AN/UYQ-120(V) Command and Control Processor (C2P) System is a Tactical

Data Link (TDL) message distribution system that provides real-time control and management of Tactical Digital Data Links (TADILs) in support of all major surface ship and shore Command, Control, and Communications (C3) systems. The C2P is a follow-on Technical Refresh (TR) upgrade for the legacy AN/UYQ-86(V) variants 1 through 7 of the Common Data Link Management system (CDLMS). The AN/UYQ-120(V) C2PS has three variants depending on the host site in which it is installed and only uses trusted software. The highest classification of the hardware and software to be exported is SECRET. Identification and security classification of classified equipment, major components, subsystems, software, technical data, documentation, training devices and services to be conveyed with the proposed sale.

4. If a technologically advanced adversary obtained knowledge of the specific hardware or software in the proposed sale, the information could be used to develop countermeasures which might reduce weapons system effectiveness or be used in the development of a system with similar or advanced capabilities.

5. A determination has been made that Japan can provide substantially the same degree of protection for the sensitive technology being released as the U.S. Government. This sale is necessary in furtherance of the U.S. foreign policy and national security objectives outlined in the Policy Justification.

6. All defense articles and services listed in this transmittal have been authorized for release and export to Japan.

#### TRIBUTE TO ROBERT CARDILLO

Mr. BLUNT. Mr. President, I take this opportunity to honor the work and career of Mr. Robert Cardillo. On February 7, 2019, Robert Cardillo will conclude nearly 36 years of service with the U.S. intelligence community, ending as Director of the National Geospatial-Intelligence Agency, or NGA.

In 1983, Robert began his career at the Defense Intelligence Agency, or DIA, as an imagery analyst. He served in a multitude of positions for DIA and NGA, to include Acting Director of Intelligence for the Joint Staff, in which he supported the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, which is the first time a civilian has ever held that position. He was then selected by the Director of National Intelligence, the DNI, to be the first ever Deputy Director for Intelligence Integration. In that capacity, he was responsible for vastly improving intelligence integration, the principal mission of the DNI as established under the Intelligence Reform and Terrorism Prevention Act. As a critical additional duty, Robert also served as the primary briefer for the President's daily brief at the White House.

From 2014 to 2019, Mr. Cardillo then led NGA as its Director. Under his guidance and direction, NGA provided much lauded geospatial intelligence support to U.S. and allied combat operations in Southwest Asia and around the globe, assisting in the fight against militant extremists. NGA also conveyed key indications and warning during crises in Northeast Asia, the Mid-

dle East, North and Central Africa, Eastern Europe, and elsewhere.

Highlighting the need to get unclassified data to the warfighter and our allies, Director Cardillo pushed hard for unclassified geospatial intelligence, or GEOINT, to exist in the open. He urged NGA to work in tandem with commercial satellite imagery providers and other unclassified industry partners. His support of innovation in artificial intelligence, automation and augmentation, and his focus on activity-based intelligence set NGA on a course to improve the speed and quality of geospatial and imagery analysis. His attention to the ebola crisis in West Africa and other humanitarian assistance and disaster response initiatives showed the value of human geography to the world.

Director Cardillo was equally successful at forging new multinational partnerships in Europe and Asia, and his outreach to industry, academia, think tanks, and other international partners led to an informal but increasingly thriving global GEOINT enterprise.

Mr. Cardillo was also the first NGA director to emphasize the importance of the Arctic and Antarctica and the first to take on the security, quality, and pedigree of imagery pixels and data, so that the GEOINT enterprise can continue to serve as a safe foundational frame of reference for the entire intelligence community.

Robert led NGA with integrity for more than 4 highly challenging and demanding years, to include the selection of a future headquarters site in St. Louis, MO. He laid the groundwork for a world-class building that will be designed to endure well into the 22nd century and to serve as the modern workplace that his workforce so richly deserves.

Director Cardillo will long be remembered as a relentless visionary who restructured the future of his field to embrace public and private partnerships, data science, and machine learning. His far-sighted vision will continue to drive requirements and ensure that NGA shows the way to a safer United States and a more secure world.

We thank him for his years of service to the intelligence community and to this country.

#### ADDITIONAL STATEMENTS

##### REMEMBERING ROGER DAVID MARSH

• Mr. BLUNT. Mr. President, I ask the Senate to join me today to support the posthumous promotion of U.S. Marine Corps SSgt Roger David Marsh to gunnery sergeant. Today I would like to recognize the distinguished service of Mr. Marsh, who passed away at the age of 72 on June 17th, 2008.

Mr. Marsh served honorably in the U.S. Marine Corps for 20 years with a superior record, including combat ac-

tions against enemy forces throughout his career in both Korea and Vietnam. Throughout his time in the Marine Corps, he received numerous awards and citations to include the bronze star with valor. Additionally, he made significant contributions to his community after his retirement from the Marine Corps by actively participating in the Veterans of Foreign Wars and American Legion, as well as his 30 years of exceptional service as chief of policy for Webb City, MO.

Prior to Staff Sergeant Marsh's retirement from the Marine Corps, he was selected for promotion to gunnery sergeant. He worked diligently for 8 years to get that promotion. Due to personal reasons, he chose to leave the Marine Corps prior to the 2-year obligation of service and therefore was not promoted. Forty-five years after his retirement, we can finally honor his service and legacy through a posthumous promotion.

The State of Missouri and our Nation were very lucky to have such a dedicated member to the community. Mr. Marsh's extraordinary service to the Marine Corps and time after his retirement were remarkable. His actions rise to the level of service that warrants this unique honor. Therefore, I ask my colleagues to join me in honoring Roger David Marsh's life and legacy with the distinction of gunnery sergeant. •

#### VERMONT STATE OF THE UNION ESSAY FINALISTS

• Mr. SANDERS. Mr. President, I ask to have printed in the RECORD some of the finalist essays written by Vermont High School students as part of the ninth annual State of the Union essay contest conducted by my office.

The essays follow, in alphabetical order according to the finalists' names. The material follows:

MEGAN BENWAY, MISSISQUOI VALLEY UNION  
HIGH SCHOOL, JUNIOR, FINALIST

A problem that is growing rapidly in our world would be the increase in children entering foster care due to the opioid crisis. The White House stated that "in 2016, more than two million Americans had an addiction to prescription or illicit opioids." This shows that there is a huge climb in the amount of people getting addicted. Emily Birnbaum and Maya Lora, writing for The Hill, reported that "the population of children in foster care had risen by 15 percent to 30 percent in just the last four years." This shows that due to opioid crisis, the foster care system is filling up, and they don't have enough homes for the children.

The first solution that could help would be to get more funding for the state to use on children and treatments. There has been funding given due to President Trump taking office; "more than \$1 billion in funding has been allocated or spent directly addressing the drug addiction and opioid crisis" (The White House). A couple ways the funding could be used for would be for hiring more social workers. A lot of the children don't get the attention they need because there are so many cases of children for one person to do.

The second solution would be to make getting treatment easier, not only getting more

treatment homes but also making them more affordable. It could go from anywhere from \$650 to \$250 a day (American Addiction Centers). That's a lot of money for someone who is struggling with an addiction and could be almost impossible to get. With the funding they can invest "in residential substance treatment program[s] that keeps families together while a parent gets help" (The Hill). By doing this the treatment center is giving the parents an incentive to get better and follow through with the treatment.

The third solution that could help would be keeping the families together. In the paragraph above The Hill mentioned a center where addicts can get help but still be with their families. One thing that would be good about keeping family together is "once [they finish their] treatment and are stable, [they] can reintegrate [the people] into [their] old work and apartment and things that will keep [them] clean and not create unsafe circumstances for [their] children to be taken away" (The Hill). This treatment center could potentially decrease the number of children entering foster care by a lot.

All of the above solutions could help drop the number of children in foster care. This is an important issue because many American children and adults are being affected by this problem. I know from experience that it hurts to be a child who watches their parents rely on drugs, and then one day some random person comes and takes the child away. There needs to be a change, and it must happen fast. If it doesn't I'm afraid that many children and adults will be stuck in a solution that could kill them all.

THOMAS BUCKLEY, COLCHESTER HIGH SCHOOL,  
FRESHMAN, FINALIST

Abraham Lincoln reminded us that "a house divided against itself cannot stand." Today, America feels almost as divided as it was before the Civil War. Partisan news channels and a primary system that favors playing to the base have produced election cycles lacking in civility and meaningful discussion. However, the erosion of respectful political discourse and the increased polarization of the electorate are not entirely the fault of politicians nor the voters who elect them. They are instead inevitable consequences of the First Past the Post (FPTP) voting system we use to elect our representatives.

First Past the Post (or plurality voting) is a voting system where each voter has one vote and the candidate with the most votes wins. While this system is intuitive and simple, it is fatally flawed. Because plurality voting has only one winner, and one vote per person, it is impossible for elections to have more than two viable candidates. Any additional strong candidates will result in the winner earning less than half of the vote. To illustrate my point, imagine a scenario in which there are three candidates: a center-right candidate, a center-left candidate, and a more liberal candidate. If half of the voters are right-leaning and half are left-leaning, the two left-leaning candidates will inevitably split the liberal vote and lead to an easy conservative victory, whether or not more people would have preferred either one of the two left-leaning options. Therefore, to avoid the negative effects of splitting the vote, voters must vote strategically by voting against the candidate they most prefer to avoid electing the candidate they most dislike. Because voters must vote strategically, elections in FPTP systems produce two major parties defined by their opposition to each other. Campaigns become increasingly negative as the parties compete in a "race to the bottom" to vilify the other party's candidate instead of promoting their own positive ideas. This is exacerbated by a

primary process that favors the most uncompromising candidates.

Attempts to address the problems with FPTP voting are being made. For example, Maine recently transitioned to Ranked Choice Voting, a system where voters can rank their favorite candidates rather than choosing only one option. This improves political discourse and favors moderation because politicians must compete for second place votes as well as first choice votes. Ranked Choice Voting eliminates the incentive for politicians to run negative campaigns. It doesn't make sense to dismiss the opposition if you want their voters to support you.

Consequently, campaigns under a Ranked Choice system tend to be more civil, with less polarized electorates. When politicians spend all of their time playing to their base, they have no incentive to compromise with the other side, weakening democracy. Because Ranked Choice Voting encourages civil discussion, politicians are more likely to work with each other on issues that are important to the American people. American democracy is broken. We should fix it by changing how we elect our civil servants.

BRENDAN BYRNE, ESSEX HIGH SCHOOL,  
JUNIOR, FINALIST

The greatest problem our country faces is not just a national problem, but a problem that affects the entire world—climate change. Climate change will impact all of the people of the world regardless of race, gender, or social class. If our country does not address this problem, the world will be destroyed. In October, the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change released a report warning that unless humanity drastically reduces CO<sub>2</sub> emissions, the change to the world's climate will become irreversible. Arctic sea ice will disappear. Sea levels will rise to the point where coastal cities will become completely submerged. Extreme weather will become more frequent. Potable water and food will become more scarce. Yet many people in the United States still deny that climate change exists, or they believe that there is nothing they can do to change the outcome. This ignorance and sense of powerlessness is dangerous at this critical point in time because the solution to climate change requires the people of the world to come together and act as one.

Under the Trump administration, the United States has stopped participating in the global effort to stop climate change. Mr. Trump has stated that the United States will withdraw from the Paris Agreement as soon as possible. This is a rash decision considering the consequences of ignoring climate change. Instead of running away from reality, the United States should accept the responsibility of being a global power and rise to the challenge of saving the world from climate change.

To solve the problem of climate change, it will take a large scale effort. Similar to the American war effort during the Second World War, every American will need to get behind the movement to stop climate change, and it is the government's responsibility to lead the people in this struggle. The government needs to issue stricter regulations on the emissions produced by large businesses. Instead of spending an enormous amount of money on the military, the government needs to invest money for scientific research to stop climate change. The government must offer incentives for people to live sustainably or impose a gas tax to reduce emissions. The United States needs to work with other nations to share ideas and solutions. Jobs can also be created from the work that will be required to clean the environment, on the federal, state, and local

level. The public education system has already started educating people about climate change and its dangers. Hopefully, this education will help change the culture so that the American people actively want to address climate change.

In the past, America has proven that it can unify as a nation and tackle global problems. It is simply a matter of Americans seeing the dangers of climate change and realizing that it must be our top priority. We must lead the rest of the world and become a role model for the world. We need to engage the government so that we change ourselves instead of the climate.

CAROLINE CASSELL, HARTFORD HIGH SCHOOL,  
FRESHMAN, FINALIST

Xenophobia is one of America's greatest debacles. Defined as the fear of foreigners, xenophobia has unnecessarily increased over the past few years due to numerous factors. America was founded by immigrants, yet we now prosecute those flocking here in search of better lives.

American immigration has always fluctuated due to the extent of xenophobia in the country at the time. During World War II numerous Jewish refugees flocked to America seeking safety from the Nazis. Among these people was Albert Einstein, now seen as one of America's greatest minds. We have seen this occurring recently with the immigration ban on Syrian immigrants. In the modern day, war torn Syrian asylum seekers are denied entrance to America and are left living in overcrowded refugee camps in Lebanon and Jordan. America's policy: keep them out, they may be terrorists.

Immigrants living inside U.S. borders are being denied the right to naturalize. Children of illegal immigrants who used to be protected under Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) are now unsure of their safety after DACA was suspended by President Trump. These harmless people whose parents wanted a better life for their children are denied citizenship due to xenophobia. The act of separating families or deporting innocent children to countries where they are unfamiliar with the language and culture is unjust.

My family lived in Saudi Arabia for six years. Living internationally taught me to be open-minded towards everyone; I attended an international school with students from over 100 nations. Every student was like me, and deserved the same rights. When I returned to the America I was alienated by classmates who posed ridiculously ignorant questions such as "Are you Muslim?" "Are you going to bomb the school?"

The issue at hand is fear. Americans need to open their eyes and educate themselves about the world, not just their country. Only 36% of all Americans have passports, and organizations such as the U.S. Peace Corps, which encourage world connections are struggling to find volunteers. We must eliminate our fear is through education. By educating citizens about the outside world, whether it be by inviting more refugees into our country, sending more Americans abroad to do service work, or having immigrants talk about their experiences, we will be able to reduce hatred and fear. We don't need a wall, we need to tear down our own walls of ignorance and hatred.

Without immigrants, America would not be the extraordinary country it is today. Through history, we have looked down on immigrants, and have created "nativist" groups who yearned to exclude immigrants from their society. Everyone deserves the rights that all Americans have; many do not have the access to such rights in their home countries. By excluding those willing to become citizens, we not only deny them opportunities in this country, but we deny them of

their rights. Let's "Make America Great Again": let's educate each other about the world around us and share our rights with those in search of better lives.

COLLIN CHUTTER-CASEY, BURLINGTON HIGH SCHOOL, SENIOR, FINALIST

Where do you imagine the human race being in 20 years? 50 years? The effects of climate change should be front and center in our minds when fantasizing about a space age world. The human desire for technology and cheap cost of living negates responsibility to the environment. Climate change means more than a rise of a few seemingly insignificant degrees over centuries of human innovation and industrialization; however, the rising oceans and temperatures, animal extinction, and increased natural disasters are the real world effects that cost us an increasing amount of money, resources, and even human lives to sweep under the rug.

One of the main effects of climate change is the rise of ocean height and temperature. According to NASA, a federally funded organization, the sea level will rise 1-4 feet by the year 2100. This is in addition to the eight inch rise in sea levels since 1880. A rise of 1-4 feet in sea levels is comparable to the shallow end of a swimming pool, but in the real world means millions of homes and businesses destroyed on the vulnerable coastline, which cannot be restored as we do with hurricanes and tornadoes. Climate change by itself may not seem to be a huge issue, but the ripple effect it creates causes colossal damage.

When solving these problems, we cannot think of our own lives, but rather future generations. Humans do not have the power to predict the future, but we can shape the future. There are two parts to the solution of climate change: Mitigation and Adaptation. Adaptation is adjusting to the effects of climate change. This plan does not deal with the issue of slowing and preventing climate change, but with preventing the effects of global warming from changing the way people live, even if it does change where they live. Mitigation is reducing the amount of greenhouse gases that are released into the atmosphere. For mitigation to be a viable solution to solve the earth's warming, we need a global plan for a global problem. This means that, as a global community, we need laws to promote and enforce renewable energy (solar, wind, hydro, and geothermal), sustainable houses and buildings, eliminate litter, cut down on trash, cut down on resource use, the list goes on. This intensive process requires a change in mindset, and support and participation from all people in all nations.

Let the U.S. stand where the world knows it to be, one step ahead of others, and carry all nations to the solution of global warming. We know the mass destruction that global warming can cause, and the best solution to counter it. So now let the question we ask not be what we imagine the world to be in 20 years, but what is necessary to get there.

FELICIA DAIGLE, RICE MEMORIAL HIGH SCHOOL, JUNIOR, FINALIST

The world today revolves around our dependency on convenience. We live in a society that works to make our lives easier through inventions like drive-thrus and one-use items. Ignoring the effects of this dependency has resulted in an environmental crisis that seems to be too great to fix. The fact that 18 million pounds of plastic enters our oceans annually should shock our generation and instill a sense of ownership about this issue (Howard). Realizing that plastic dominates most of our consumerism and convenience needs should prioritized re-

ducing its production. The way to treat this issue would be by placing a ban on unnecessary plastic goods and an emphasis on teaching students about our oceans and environment instead of ignoring the problem.

By banning plastic accommodations like straw, bags, and bottles, over 14 billion tons of plastic waste could be prevented (Howard). The United States would be joining other nations like the United Kingdom and India in an effort to reduce plastic waste. The European Commission proposed, "a ban on 10 common items that it says make up about 70 percent of the litter in EU waters. This includes plastic straws, drink stirrers, plates, and more" (Howard). All these items seem to make life easier but they have become the reason for the world's struggles with plastic pollution.

When we share the knowledge about how harmful plastic has become, then we take responsibility about choosing a plastic water bottle because it's easy. I only learned about the dire state of our oceans a few years ago when I walked on the beaches in Santa Barbara and saw plastic Starbucks cups and straws intertwined with the seaweed that had washed up onto shore. From that moment I realized that plastic does not go anywhere but into landfills and if we keep producing more and more, none of our beaches will have no plastic debris. If schools took action and speak about plastic waste, there would be no excuse for our ignorance regarding the planet's environmental state.

Taking plastic pollution seriously, starting by a national ban on straws, bags, and water bottles, would be the first step in the right direction. We cannot undo the past, but the future lies in the decisions we start making today. Plastic, a man-made product, cannot keep killing thousands of sea creatures without our government trying to enforce some kind of change. If the United States does not understand its dire need for plastic reduction, our future generations will never know the ocean with plastic filling them.

PAIGE DEAN, SOUTH BURLINGTON HIGH SCHOOL, SENIOR, FINALIST

Members of Congress, I come before you today to speak about something that is near to my heart. I spend my summers sailing on beautiful Lake Champlain in my home state of Vermont, and every Fourth of July my family and I kayak out into Burlington Bay and watch the fireworks. The lake is part of many Vermonters' lives; from childhood jokes about Champ, our local lake monster, to walks along the shore and trips across on the ferry, our Lake Champlain has been an integral part of the Vermont experience.

But today, Lake Champlain is suffering, just as the rest of America is. Devastating hurricanes in the South are displacing us and flooding our homes and businesses. Droughts and wildfires in the West raze the ground, destroy our property, prevent our crops from growing and force us to flee. Our shining seas are encroaching on our plentiful shores, the water lapping ever closer, year by year, to our front stoop. Summers are getting hotter, and storms wilder. We all know the cause, and what it means for us. Climate change is real. We are experiencing it right here, right now. Science does not lie, and all around our nation we are seeing it firsthand. The homeowners in Louisiana who can't sell because their house is in a flood zone, the farmers in Arizona whose crops are withering from drought, the schoolchildren in Flint, Michigan, whose tap water is unsafe to drink, and those Vermont who can't utilize their lake due to dangerous algae blooms.

Every single thing I have listed has its roots in our own actions. However we twist it, the facts remain: we are responsible for climate change.

There is still hope. If we act now, we can lessen the effects of climate change on our homes and livelihoods. I call now on Congress to pass and support strong and direct legislation to help our environment and economy. Strengthen the EPA! Ensure that this vital agency has the resources and leadership necessary to protect our lands and create real change. Pass legislation tightening regulations, taxing and limiting the production and spread of pollutants, give incentives to alternative clean and sustainable energy companies, move to limit our reliance on oil and gas, and make America energy independent and sustainable. We have thousands of capable scientists, business leaders, policy experts and engaged citizens ready to work on solutions and save our planet. Let them! Work with our allies and neighbors to mitigate climate change worldwide. Rejoin and support the Paris Climate Agreement! Climate change affects our whole planet, and only global solutions and partnership will solve it. Let's work on fostering the clean energy and environmental protection programs of other countries through incentives and aid, especially to developing countries while promoting energy independence.

Solutions are in our grasp, we only have to believe in them, reach out, and grab them. Otherwise, we are doing ourselves, the people of America, and indeed the whole world a great disservice. The world's future, America's future, our future is at stake. Act now.

AYNSA DENBY, ST. JOHNSBURY ACADEMY, SOPHOMORE, FINALIST

FIGHTING FOR WOMEN'S REPRODUCTIVE RIGHTS

In America, woman are still continually fighting for women's reproductive rights 70 years after Roe vs. Wade was passed. While many people agree that women have a right to their own body, many politicians still engage in an unrelenting and increasingly aggressive attacks on women's reproductive health care. They do this by introducing and passing unconstitutional bills that would restrict women's rights, for example by stifling access to essential health care and endangering women's lives. To put this into perspective, this, that means hundreds of women's rights are being taken away with each restriction passed, according to the National Reproductive Rights Organization. A possible solution is the Women's Health Protection Act which would prevent states from passing these dangerous legislations and would prohibit state and federal politicians from imposing a range of dangerous anti-choice provisions that take away women's rights and choice over their own body.

In his first year in office, Trump and his administration have brought an aggressive campaign against women's sexual and reproductive rights to the White House, by limiting women's access to birth control and his anti-abortion advocacy. To understand the administration's emphasis on rolling back birth control access and abortion rights, it's important to remember the administration is filled with people who have a track record of anti-abortion legislation and advocacy throughout the years such as Vice President Mike Pence and Trump's top healthcare advisor Katy Talento. Trump administration's 2018-'22 draft plan for Health and Human Services, for the first time ever suggested the federal health agency will now be "serving and protecting Americans at every stage of life, beginning at conception." this language about conception and unborn children signals a shift toward faith-based decision-making in American health care. But women's rights are not based on the faith or beliefs of the government officials but rather each woman's individual choice, therefore the decision should be up the person whose



body is being affected and not a single group's beliefs.

The Women's Health Protection Act would prevent states from passing these dangerous legislations and would prohibit state and federal politicians from imposing a range of dangerous anti-choice provisions. Senator Sanders needs to expand and protect the reproductive rights of women by continuing to fight and support for The Women's Health Protection Act, and by bringing attention to this continuing struggle for equality and individual choice over one's own body. Senator Sanders also can fight to keep Planned Parenthood funded and covered by Medicaid, as attacking Planned Parenthood remains a priority for social conservatives in our Congress today. As of right now 2.5 million people rely on Planned Parenthood for a range of health care services, like birth control and cancer screenings, and defunding it would change the health of millions of Americans as found in the article "How Women's reproductive rights stalled under Trump" by Julia Belluz. So therefore I am not only asking for continuing support for women's reproductive rights but also the health of millions of Americans.●

### MESSAGES FROM THE PRESIDENT

Messages from the President of the United States were communicated to the Senate by Ms. Ridgway, one of his secretaries.

### EXECUTIVE MESSAGES REFERRED

As in executive session the Presiding Officer laid before the Senate messages from the President of the United States submitting sundry nominations which were referred to the appropriate committees.

(The messages received today are printed at the end of the Senate proceedings.)

### INTRODUCTION OF BILLS AND JOINT RESOLUTIONS

The following bills and joint resolutions were introduced, read the first and second times by unanimous consent, and referred as indicated:

By Mr. BLUMENTHAL (for himself and Mr. VAN HOLLEN):

S. 269. A bill to protect our Social Security system and improve benefits for current and future generations; to the Committee on Finance.

By Mrs. MURRAY (for herself, Ms. BALDWIN, Mr. BENNET, Mr. BLUMENTHAL, Mr. BOOKER, Mr. BROWN, Ms. CANTWELL, Mr. CARDIN, Mr. CARPER, Mr. CASEY, Mr. COONS, Ms. CORTEZ MASTO, Ms. DUCKWORTH, Mr. DURBIN, Mrs. FEINSTEIN, Mrs. GILLIBRAND, Ms. HARRIS, Ms. HASSAN, Mr. HEINRICH, Ms. HIRONO, Mr. JONES, Mr. KAINE, Ms. KLOBUCHAR, Mr. LEAHY, Mr. MANCHIN, Mr. MARKEY, Mr. MENENDEZ, Mr. MERKLEY, Mr. MURPHY, Mr. PETERS, Mr. REED, Ms. ROSEN, Mr. SANDERS, Mr. SCHATZ, Mr. SCHUMER, Mrs. SHAHEEN, Ms. SINEMA, Ms. SMITH, Ms. STABENOW, Mr. TESTER, Mr. UDALL, Mr. VAN HOLLEN, Mr. WARNER, Ms. WARREN, Mr. WHITEHOUSE, and Mr. WYDEN):

S. 270. A bill to amend the Fair Labor Standards Act of 1938 to provide more effective remedies to victims of discrimination in

the payment of wages on the basis of sex, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

By Mr. BLUMENTHAL:

S. 271. A bill to grant lawful permanent resident status to certain eligible persons who were separated from immediate family members by the Department of Homeland Security; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Ms. WARREN:

S. 272. A bill to establish the policy of the United States regarding the no-first-use of nuclear weapons; to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

By Mr. ROBERTS (for himself, Mr. MORAN, Mr. BLUNT, and Mrs. FISCHER):

S. 273. A bill to amend the Communications Act of 1934 to require providers of a covered service to provide location information concerning the telecommunications device of a user of such service to an investigative or law enforcement officer or an employee or other agent of a public safety answering point in an emergency situation involving risk of death or serious physical harm or in order to respond to the user's call for emergency services; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

By Mr. ENZI (for himself, Mr. BLUNT, Mr. CORNYN, Mr. COTTON, Mr. DAINES, Ms. ERNST, Mr. INHOFE, Mr. LANKFORD, Mr. LEE, Mr. RISCH, Mr. SASSE, Mr. SCOTT of South Carolina, Mr. CASSIDY, Mr. KENNEDY, Mrs. BLACKBURN, Mr. HAWLEY, and Mr. CRUZ):

S. 274. A bill to ensure that organizations with religious or moral convictions are allowed to continue to provide services for children; to the Committee on Finance.

By Ms. KLOBUCHAR (for herself and Mr. SASSE):

S. 275. A bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to provide for lifelong learning accounts, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Finance.

By Mr. TESTER (for himself and Mr. WYDEN):

S. 276. A bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to require certain tax-exempt organizations to include on annual returns the names and addresses of substantial contributors, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Finance.

By Ms. HIRONO (for herself, Ms. MURKOWSKI, Mr. GARDNER, and Mr. COONS):

S. 277. A bill to posthumously award a Congressional Gold Medal to Fred Korematsu, in recognition of his dedication to justice and equality; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

By Mr. LEE (for himself, Mr. CASSIDY, Mr. RUBIO, Mr. YOUNG, Mr. RISCH, Mr. TILLIS, Mr. BURR, Mr. PERDUE, Mr. ROBERTS, Mr. CRUZ, Mr. ROUNDS, Mr. INHOFE, Mr. CRAPO, Ms. ERNST, Mr. GARDNER, Mr. SCOTT of Florida, Mr. HAWLEY, Mrs. BLACKBURN, and Mr. DAINES):

S. 278. A bill to require the Congressional Budget Office to make publicly available the fiscal and mathematical models, data, and other details of computations used in cost analysis and scoring; to the Committee on the Budget.

By Mr. THUNE (for himself and Mr. ROUNDS):

S. 279. A bill to allow tribal grant schools to participate in the Federal Employee Health Benefits Program; to the Committee on Indian Affairs.

By Ms. HARRIS (for herself, Mr. GRAHAM, Mr. JONES, and Mr. BOOKER):

S. 280. A bill to reauthorize the Historically Black Colleges and Universities His-

toric Preservation program; to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

By Mr. KAINE:

S. 281. A bill to provide for a period of continuing appropriations in the event of a lapse in appropriations under the normal appropriations process, and to prohibit consideration of other matters in the Senate if appropriations are not enacted; to the Committee on Appropriations.

By Ms. MURKOWSKI (for herself, Mr. SULLIVAN, Ms. CANTWELL, and Mr. MERKLEY):

S. 282. A bill to amend the market name of genetically altered salmon in the United States, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

By Ms. COLLINS (for herself, Mr. CARDIN, Mrs. BLACKBURN, Mr. KING, Mrs. CAPITO, Mr. WICKER, and Mr. STABENOW):

S. 283. A bill to amend title XVIII of the Social Security Act to improve access to, and utilization of, bone mass measurement benefits under part B of the Medicare program by establishing a minimum payment amount under such part for bone mass measurement; to the Committee on Finance.

By Mr. ISAKSON (for himself, Mrs. SHAHEEN, Mr. ALEXANDER, Mr. BARRASSO, Mrs. BLACKBURN, Mr. CARPER, Mr. CORNYN, Mr. GRASSLEY, Ms. HASSAN, Mr. KAINE, Ms. KLOBUCHAR, Mr. PORTMAN, Mr. SCOTT of Florida, and Mr. THUNE):

S. 284. A bill to provide for a biennial budget process and a biennial appropriations process and to enhance oversight and the performance of the Federal Government; to the Committee on the Budget.

By Mr. SANDERS (for himself, Mr. LEE, and Mr. MURPHY):

S.J. Res. 7. A joint resolution to direct the removal of United States Armed Forces from hostilities in the Republic of Yemen that have not been authorized by Congress; to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

### ADDITIONAL COSPONSORS

S. 1

At the request of Mr. RUBIO, the name of the Senator from Oklahoma (Mr. INHOFE) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1, a bill to make improvements to certain defense and security assistance provisions and to authorize the appropriation of funds to Israel, to reauthorize the United States-Jordan Defense Cooperation Act of 2015, and to halt the wholesale slaughter of the Syrian people, and for other purposes.

S. 69

At the request of Mr. CORNYN, the name of the Senator from Missouri (Mr. BLUNT) was added as a cosponsor of S. 69, a bill to allow reciprocity for the carrying of certain concealed firearms.

S. 104

At the request of Mr. PORTMAN, the names of the Senator from North Carolina (Mr. BURR), the Senator from Texas (Mr. CORNYN) and the Senator from Louisiana (Mr. KENNEDY) were added as cosponsors of S. 104, a bill to amend title 31, United States Code, to provide for automatic continuing resolutions.

S. 162

At the request of Ms. SMITH, the name of the Senator from Rhode Island

(Mr. REED) was added as a cosponsor of S. 162, a bill to provide back pay to low-wage contractor employees, and for other purposes.

S. 183

At the request of Mr. LANKFORD, the name of the Senator from Utah (Mr. LEE) was added as a cosponsor of S. 183, a bill to amend the Public Health Service Act to prohibit governmental discrimination against providers of health services that are not involved in abortion.

S. 203

At the request of Mr. CRAPO, the name of the Senator from South Dakota (Mr. ROUNDS) was added as a cosponsor of S. 203, a bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to permanently extend the railroad track maintenance credit, and for other purposes.

S. 225

At the request of Mr. KAINE, the name of the Senator from Maryland (Mr. VAN HOLLEN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 225, a bill to provide for partnerships among State and local governments, regional entities, and the private sector to preserve, conserve, and enhance the visitor experience at nationally significant battlefields of the American Revolution, War of 1812, and Civil War, and for other purposes.

S. 249

At the request of Mr. INHOFE, the name of the Senator from Texas (Mr. CRUZ) was added as a cosponsor of S. 249, a bill to direct the Secretary of State to develop a strategy to regain observer status for Taiwan in the World Health Organization, and for other purposes.

S. 262

At the request of Mr. VAN HOLLEN, the names of the Senator from California (Ms. HARRIS) and the Senator from Ohio (Mr. BROWN) were added as cosponsors of S. 262, a bill to provide for a pay increase in 2019 for certain civilian employees of the Federal Government, and for other purposes.

AMENDMENT NO. 66

At the request of Mr. TOOMEY, the name of the Senator from Wisconsin (Mr. JOHNSON) was added as a cosponsor of amendment No. 66 intended to be proposed to S. 1, a bill to make improvements to certain defense and security assistance provisions and to authorize the appropriation of funds to Israel, to reauthorize the United States-Jordan Defense Cooperation Act of 2015, and to halt the wholesale slaughter of the Syrian people, and for other purposes.

#### STATEMENTS ON INTRODUCED BILLS AND JOINT RESOLUTIONS

By Mr. ROBERTS (for himself, Mr. MORAN, Mr. BLUNT, and Mrs. FISCHER):

S. 273. A bill to amend the Communications Act of 1934 to require providers of a covered service to provide

location information concerning the telecommunications device of a user of such service to an investigative or law enforcement officer or an employee or other agent of a public safety answering point in an emergency situation involving risk of death or serious physical harm or in order to respond to the user's call for emergency services; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

Mr. ROBERTS. Mr. President, I rise today to speak about an important piece of legislation I just filed, aptly named after the young Kansan whose life and bright future was cut short by a senseless act of violence and whose case now is the inspiration for why we desperately need to update the law.

Almost 12 years ago, on June 2, 2017, 18-year-old Kelsey Smith was abducted in broad daylight from an Overland Park, KS, parking lot. Kelsey's abduction was captured on the store's closed-circuit security camera, which left little doubt about the emergency sense of the situation. This was an emergency.

Here is the tragedy. Four days after Kelsey disappeared, authorities were able to locate her body after a wireless provider finally released the call information from her cell phone—4 critical days. Providing location information as fast as possible is absolutely critical to ensure that law enforcement officials can rescue victims in imminent danger of death or serious physical harm and hopefully prevent future fates similar to Kelsey's.

This legislation is the culmination of years of work among legislators at both the Federal and State levels, including industry stakeholders, privacy advocates, and, most importantly, Kelsey's brave parents, who spearheaded this initiative and have advocated to create commonsense reforms that properly balance the needs of law enforcement with Fourth Amendment protections for all of our citizens.

Through their advocacy and tireless efforts, Missey and Greg Smith have helped enact laws, oftentimes with unanimous support, in 23 States, including my home State of Kansas. This law provides law enforcement with the necessary tools to rescue individuals in emergency situations where the threat of death or serious bodily injury is imminent.

The impact of this law at the State level has been real and measurable. For example, in May 2012, one month after the enactment of its State's version of the Kelsey Smith Act, local authorities in Tennessee were successful in saving the life of a child who had been abducted by a suspected child rapist. Because the child was believed to be in imminent danger, the police were able to successfully receive the location of the suspect's cell phone in a window of time that led to the safe recovery of the child alive and before she was assaulted.

In February of 2015, Kelsey's Law helped save the life of a 5-month-old Lenexa, KS, girl when a car with a

baby in the back seat was stolen from its mother. Through Kelsey's Law, police were able to ping that mother's phone, which was left in the car, and, within an hour, the baby was reunited with her parents.

According to the National Center for Missing and Exploited Children, the first 3 hours are critical to recovering a child alive. That is why it is necessary that in these narrowly defined, isolated instances in which a person's very life is at stake, an exemption should be made to allow wireless carriers to immediately ping an individual's phone and release to law enforcement the whereabouts of that individual.

Understanding this, my legislation would provide law enforcement with the ability to recover the location of children, other missing individuals, and only in very specific emergency situations; namely, where there is risk of death or serious bodily injury.

Don't just take it from PAT ROBERTS. Public safety professionals with experience in the field support this lifesaving legislation. According to the retired Johnson County sheriff, Frank Denning:

Time is of the essence in these types of incidents and the narrow exception for law enforcement to act with immediacy is key here. For this not to be a Federal law seems unjust to those who have loved ones in harm's way and this type of intervention can and will save lives.

Major Scott Boden with the Johnson County Sheriff's Office in Kansas says:

Over my 22-year law enforcement career with the Johnson County Sheriff's Office, 17 years have been spent in our dispatch/911 center. During that time, the Kelsey Smith Law has been the single most important piece of legislation related to potentially saving the lives of suicidal subjects, assisting endangered children, and addressing live threats when cell phone location is necessary and seconds count. The difference this law has made cannot be overstated and I look forward to the day it becomes available all across this country as a resource to assist first responders in their most critical service saving lives.

Jennifer Lanter, the 9-1-1 director for Loudon County, TN, says:

In Tennessee, we have had the privilege of having Kelsey's Law enacted for several years. There are multiple examples of how utilizing this law has resulted in lives being saved that otherwise would have been lost.

This law enables the men and women that have dedicated their lives to the protection of others to ensure they are able to do everything possible to locate someone that needs help. The benefits of this law being passed at the Federal level will be far-reaching, and countless lives will be saved.

It is not just these individual law enforcement officials who support this bill. The bill is also supported by the National District Attorneys Association, the Federal Law Enforcement Officers Association, the Sergeants Benevolent Association, the International Association of Chiefs of Police, the Major County Sheriffs of America, the National Association of Police Organizations, the Fraternal Order of Police,

and the National Sheriffs' Association. I don't know of any law enforcement organization that has been left out, and if it has been left out, it would certainly support the bill. CTIA, the wireless association, also supports this commonsense legislation.

Just this morning, I received a letter of support from John Walsh, who is the cofounder of the National Center for Missing and Exploited Children and was the well-known host of the television show, "America's Most Wanted." Mr. Walsh has dedicated his life to advocating for victims' rights. It began with his fight for the passage of the Missing Children's Assistance Act following the abduction and subsequent murder of his son Adam.

Fortunately, for my colleagues, voting for this bill will not take a blind leap of faith. Kelsey's Law is already saving lives in States like Kansas, New Jersey, Nebraska, Minnesota, New Hampshire, North Dakota, Tennessee, Hawaii, Missouri, Utah, West Virginia, Colorado, Nevada, Rhode Island, Oregon, Pennsylvania, Arkansas, Iowa, Washington, Louisiana, Delaware, Indiana, and Alabama. Yes, I wanted to repeat all 23.

Oftentimes, the approval by State legislatures has been unanimous, and that is because Kelsey's Law strikes the appropriate balance between ensuring that law enforcement has the tools it needs to help individuals who are in grave danger and ensuring that the proper checks are in place to guard against government overreach.

My legislation requires all law enforcement agencies to maintain a record of all requests made under the Kelsey Smith Act. This record will include the name of the officer who is requesting location information from a wireless carrier, a description of the request that explains the need for the disclosure of location information, and a declaration that an individual's location information is needed in order to offer him life assistance during an emergency situation that, again, involves a risk of death or serious physical harm.

I stress that nothing—absolutely nothing—in the Kelsey Smith Act prohibits wireless carriers from continuing to operate the robust law enforcement verification systems that they use today in order to make absolutely certain that when a request is made, it is coming from an authorized law enforcement official.

Kelsey was never given the opportunity to attend college or to get married or to have children and experience the American dream that many of us take for granted every day. Yet what she did do was to inspire her mother and her father to make it their mission in life to help educate and empower communities and children in order to help prevent another case like this from ever happening again.

Kelsey's father, Greg, who is a former law enforcement officer himself and a Kansas State senator, said it best when

he quoted President Abraham Lincoln to describe what Kelsey had accomplished:

In the end, it is not the years in your life that count. It is the life in your years.

I thank my colleagues for the opportunity to speak on the floor today and to offer what, I think, is a commonsense bill that will help prevent tragedies like Kelsey's. I also thank Senator MORAN, Senator FISCHER, and Senator BLUNT for their strong support and co-sponsoring of this bill. I welcome the President's support as well.

I ask every colleague in this body to consider one question: If it were your children, your grandchildren, your spouses, would you not want law enforcement to have immediate access to information that could potentially save their lives and bring them home?

Let's honor Kelsey's memory by passing this legislation in Congress. I see no reason why it could not pass by unanimous consent.

I thank the Presiding Officer.

By Mr. KAINE:

S. 281. A bill to provide for a period of continuing appropriations in the event of a lapse in appropriations under the normal appropriations process, and to prohibit consideration of other matters in the Senate if appropriations are not enacted; to the Committee on Appropriations.

Mr. KAINE. Mr. President, today I introduced the End Shutdowns Act. Enacting this bill would go a long way towards avoiding the pain and suffering caused to families from government shutdowns, such as the recent 35 day partial shutdown.

I have been outspoken against President Trump's use of a government shutdown as a negotiating tactic, and—in an effort to take away that option in the future—this bill would initiate an automatic continuing resolution on October 1 if no appropriations bill is passed by that date. The legislation would then stop the Senate from moving forward with any other legislation, outside of an emergency scenario, until Congress reached an agreement on a long-term spending deal.

I am advocating for my colleagues to consider supporting this bill, especially those negotiating on the current spending bills set to expire February 15, to include legislation to prevent future shutdowns in any bipartisan deal reached by that deadline.

#### AMENDMENTS SUBMITTED AND PROPOSED

SA 81. Mr. BLUMENTHAL submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 1, to make improvements to certain defense and security assistance provisions and to authorize the appropriation of funds to Israel, to reauthorize the United States-Jordan Defense Cooperation Act of 2015, and to halt the wholesale slaughter of the Syrian people, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 82. Mr. PERDUE (for himself and Mr. ISAKSON) submitted an amendment intended

to be proposed by him to the bill S. 1, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 83. Mr. SASSE submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 1, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 84. Mr. SASSE submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 1, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 85. Mr. SASSE submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 1, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 86. Mr. SASSE submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 1, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 87. Mr. SASSE submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 1, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 88. Mr. KENNEDY submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 65 proposed by Mr. MCCONNELL (for himself, Mr. GRAHAM, Mr. BLUNT, Mr. BURR, Mr. ROMNEY, Ms. ERNST, Mr. INHOFE, Mr. RUBIO, Mr. SASSE, Mrs. FISCHER, Mr. GRASSLEY, Mr. JOHNSON, Mr. SHELBY, Mr. TILLIS, Mr. CORNYN, Mr. SULLIVAN, Mr. WICKER, Mr. LANKFORD, Mr. YOUNG, and Mr. BOOZMAN) to the bill S. 1, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

#### TEXT OF AMENDMENTS

SA 81. Mr. BLUMENTHAL submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 1, to make improvements to certain defense and security assistance provisions and to authorize the appropriation of funds to Israel, to reauthorize the United States-Jordan Defense Cooperation Act of 2015, and to halt the wholesale slaughter of the Syrian people, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

In section 203(2), strike "crisis." and insert the following: "crisis; and

(3) the United States must recommit to resettling a robust number of refugees to meet its share of the global need to alleviate instability in countries like Jordan, which have absorbed a disproportionate number of displaced people fleeing the crisis in Syria, and reaffirm the responsibility of the United States to resettle refugees as a key tenet of foreign policy.

SA 82. Mr. PERDUE (for himself and Mr. ISAKSON) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 1, to make improvements to certain defense and security assistance provisions and to authorize the appropriation of funds to Israel, to reauthorize the United States-Jordan Defense Cooperation Act of 2015, and to halt the wholesale slaughter of the Syrian people, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the end, add the following:

#### TITLE V—ADDITIONAL SUPPLEMENTAL APPROPRIATIONS FOR DISASTER RELIEF, 2019

The following sums in this title are appropriated, out of any money in the Treasury not otherwise appropriated, for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2019, and for other purposes, namely:

DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE  
 AGRICULTURAL PROGRAMS  
 PROCESSING, RESEARCH AND MARKETING  
 OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY

For an additional amount for the “Office of the Secretary”, \$3,005,442,000, which shall remain available until December 31, 2020, for necessary expenses related to losses of crops (including milk and harvested adulterated wine grapes), trees, bushes, and vines, as a consequence of Hurricanes Michael or Florence, other hurricanes, typhoons, volcanic activity, or wildfires occurring in calendar year 2018 under such terms and conditions as determined by the Secretary of Agriculture (referred to in this title as the “Secretary”): *Provided*, That the Secretary may provide assistance for such losses in the form of block grants to eligible states and territories and such assistance may include compensation to producers, as determined by the Secretary, for past or future crop insurance premiums, forest restoration, and poultry and livestock losses: *Provided further*, That of the amounts provided under this heading, tree assistance payments may be made under section 1501(e) of the Agricultural Act of 2014 (7 U.S.C. 9081(e)) to eligible orchardists or nursery tree growers (as defined in such section) of pecan trees with a tree mortality rate that exceeds 7.5 percent (adjusted for normal mortality) and is less than 15 percent (adjusted for normal mortality), to be available until expended, for losses incurred during the period beginning January 1, 2018, and ending December 31, 2018: *Provided further*, That in the case of producers impacted by volcanic activity that resulted in the loss of crop land, or access to crop land, the Secretary shall consider all measures available, as appropriate, to bring replacement land into production: *Provided further*, That the total amount of payments received under this heading and applicable policies of crop insurance under the Federal Crop Insurance Act (7 U.S.C. 1501 et seq.) or the Noninsured Crop Disaster Assistance Program (NAP) under section 196 of the Federal Agriculture Improvement and Reform Act of 1996 (7 U.S.C. 7333) shall not exceed 90 percent of the loss as determined by the Secretary: *Provided further*, That the total amount of payments received under this heading for producers who did not obtain a policy or plan of insurance for an insurable commodity for the applicable crop year under the Federal Crop Insurance Act (7 U.S.C. 1501 et seq.) for the crop incurring the losses or did not file the required paperwork and pay the service fee by the applicable State filing deadline for a noninsurable commodity for the applicable crop year under NAP for the crop incurring the losses shall not exceed 70 percent of the loss as determined by the Secretary: *Provided further*, That producers receiving payments under this heading, as determined by the Secretary, shall be required to purchase crop insurance where crop insurance is available for the next two available crop years, excluding tree insurance policies, and producers receiving payments under this heading shall be required to purchase coverage under NAP where crop insurance is not available in the next two available crop years, as determined by the Secretary: *Provided further*, That, not later than 120 days after the end of fiscal year 2019, the Secretary shall submit a report to the Congress specifying the type, amount, and method of such assistance by state and territory: *Provided further*, That such amount is designated by the Congress as being for an emergency requirement pursuant to section 251(b)(2)(A)(i) of the Balanced Budget and Emergency Deficit Control Act of 1985.

FARM SERVICE AGENCY

EMERGENCY FOREST RESTORATION PROGRAM

For an additional amount for the “Emergency Forest Restoration Program”, for necessary expenses related to the consequences of Hurricanes Michael and Florence and wildfires occurring in calendar year 2018, and other natural disasters, \$480,000,000, to remain available until expended: *Provided*, That such amount is designated by the Congress as being for an emergency requirement pursuant to section 251(b)(2)(A)(i) of the Balanced Budget and Emergency Deficit Control Act of 1985.

NATURAL RESOURCES CONSERVATION SERVICE

WATERSHED AND FLOOD PREVENTION  
 OPERATIONS

For an additional amount for “Watershed and Flood Prevention Operations”, for necessary expenses for the Emergency Watershed Protection Program related to the consequences of Hurricanes Michael and Florence and wildfires occurring in calendar year 2018, and other natural disasters, \$125,000,000, to remain available until expended: *Provided*, That such amount is designated by the Congress as being for an emergency requirement pursuant to section 251(b)(2)(A)(i) of the Balanced Budget and Emergency Deficit Control Act of 1985.

RURAL DEVELOPMENT

RURAL COMMUNITY FACILITIES PROGRAM  
 ACCOUNT

For an additional amount for the cost of grants for rural community facilities programs as authorized by section 306 and described in section 381E(d)(1) of the Consolidated Farm and Rural Development Act, for necessary expenses related to the consequences of Hurricanes Michael and Florence and wildfires occurring in calendar year 2018, and other natural disasters, \$150,000,000, to remain available until expended: *Provided*, That sections 381E-H and 381N of the Consolidated Farm and Rural Development Act are not applicable to the funds made available under this heading: *Provided further*, That such amount is designated by the Congress as being for an emergency requirement pursuant to section 251(b)(2)(A)(i) of the Balanced Budget and Emergency Deficit Control Act of 1985.

GENERAL PROVISIONS—THIS TITLE

SEC. 501. In addition to amounts otherwise made available, out of the funds made available under section 18 of Food and Nutrition Act of 2008, \$25,200,000 shall be available for the Secretary to provide a grant to the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands for disaster nutrition assistance in response to the Presidentially declared major disasters and emergencies: *Provided*, That funds made available to the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands under this section shall remain available for obligation by the Commonwealth until September 30, 2020: *Provided further*, That such amount is designated by the Congress as being for an emergency requirement pursuant to section 251(b)(2)(A)(i) of the Balanced Budget and Emergency Deficit Control Act of 1985.

SEC. 502. For purposes of administering title I of subdivision 1 of division B of the Bipartisan Budget Act of 2018 (Public Law 115-123), losses to agricultural producers resulting from hurricanes shall also include losses incurred from Tropical Storm Cindy and losses of peach and blueberry crops in calendar year 2017 due to extreme cold: *Provided*, That the amounts provided by this section are designated by the Congress as being for an emergency requirement pursuant to section 251(b)(2)(A)(i) of the Balanced Budget and Emergency Deficit Control Act of 1985: *Provided further*, That amounts

repurposed under this heading that were previously designated by the Congress as an emergency requirement pursuant to the Balanced Budget and Emergency Deficit Control Act of 1985 are designated by the Congress as an emergency requirement pursuant to section 251(b)(2)(A)(i) of the Balanced Budget and Emergency Deficit Control Act of 1985.

SEC. 503. (a)(1) Except as provided in paragraph (2), a person or legal entity is not eligible to receive a payment under the Market Facilitation Program established pursuant to the Commodity Credit Corporation Charter Act (15 U.S.C. 714 et seq.) if the average adjusted gross income of such person or legal entity is greater than \$900,000.

(2) Paragraph (1) shall not apply to a person or legal entity if at least 75 percent of the adjusted gross income of such person or legal entity is derived from farming, ranching, or forestry related activities.

(b) A person or legal entity may not receive a payment under the Market Facilitation Program described in subsection (a)(1), directly or indirectly, of more than \$125,000.

(c) In this section, the term “average adjusted gross income” has the meaning given the term defined in section 760.1502 of title 7 Code of Federal Regulations (as in effect July 18, 2018).

(d) The amount provided by this section is designated by the Congress as being for an emergency requirement pursuant to section 251(b)(2)(A)(i) of the Balanced Budget and Emergency Deficit Control Act of 1985.

**SA 83.** Mr. SASSE submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 1, to make improvements to certain defense and security assistance provisions and to authorize the appropriation of funds to Israel, to reauthorize the United States-Jordan Defense Cooperation Act of 2015, and to halt the wholesale slaughter of the Syrian people, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the end of subtitle D of title III, add the following:

**SEC. 336. REPORT ON IMPACT OF INTELLIGENCE COLLECTION AND RISK TO UNITED STATES CITIZENS IN EVENT OF WITHDRAWAL OF UNITED STATES ARMED FORCES FROM SYRIA.**

Not later than 90 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the President shall submit to Congress a report detailing the anticipated loss of intelligence caused by the withdrawal of United States Armed Forces from Syria and the risks, including the possibility of increased terrorist attacks, posed to United States citizens in the region, in Europe, and in the continental United States.

**SA 84.** Mr. SASSE submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 1, to make improvements to certain defense and security assistance provisions and to authorize the appropriation of funds to Israel, to reauthorize the United States-Jordan Defense Cooperation Act of 2015, and to halt the wholesale slaughter of the Syrian people, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the end, add the following:

**TITLE V—GENERAL PROVISIONS**

**SEC. 501. REPORT ON RUSSIAN INTERESTS IN VENEZUELA.**

Not later than 90 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the President shall

submit to Congress a report detailing Russian assets and personnel in Venezuela and assessing the probability that Russian security forces or private military contractors of Russian origin take an active role in supporting Nicolás Maduro's efforts to retain power.

**SA 85.** Mr. SASSE submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 1, to make improvements to certain defense and security assistance provisions and to authorize the appropriation of funds to Israel, to reauthorize the United States-Jordan Defense Cooperation Act of 2015, and to halt the wholesale slaughter of the Syrian people, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the appropriate place, insert the following:

**SEC. \_\_\_\_ . ANNUAL REPORT ON CHINESE COMMUNIST PARTY INFLUENCE AND PROPAGANDA ACTIVITIES IN UNITED STATES.**

(a) **ANNUAL REPORT REQUIRED.**—Not later than 180 days after the date of the enactment of this Act and not less frequently than once each year thereafter, the Director of National Intelligence shall, acting through the Director of the National Counterintelligence Security Center, submit to Congress a report on influence and propaganda activities of the Chinese Communist Party, the Government of the People's Republic of China, and the Chinese People's Liberation Army carried out in the United States.

(b) **FORM OF REPORTS.**—Each report submitted under subsection (a) shall be submitted in unclassified form, but may include a classified annex.

**SA 86.** Mr. SASSE submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 1, to make improvements to certain defense and security assistance provisions and to authorize the appropriation of funds to Israel, to reauthorize the United States-Jordan Defense Cooperation Act of 2015, and to halt the wholesale slaughter of the Syrian people, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the appropriate place, insert the following:

**SEC. \_\_\_\_ . DIRECTOR OF NATIONAL INTELLIGENCE REPORT ON BELT AND ROAD INITIATIVE OF PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC OF CHINA.**

(a) **REPORT REQUIRED.**—Not later than 180 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Director of National Intelligence shall submit to Congress a report on the security implications of the Belt and Road Initiative of the People's Republic of China.

(b) **CONTENTS.**—The report submitted under subsection (a) shall include the following:

(1) An assessment of the objectives of the Belt and Road Initiative and the ability of China to meet those objectives.

(2) An evaluation of the security implications of the Belt and Road Initiative, including specific military applications in both peacetime and during conflict.

(3) An assessment of the current and future effects of the initiative on regional economic, political, and security interests of the United States and allies and partners of the United States.

(c) **FORM OF REPORT.**—The report submitted under subsection (a) shall be submitted in unclassified form, but may include a classified annex.

**SA 87.** Mr. SASSE submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 1, to make improvements to certain defense and security assistance provisions and to authorize the appropriation of funds to Israel, to reauthorize the United States-Jordan Defense Cooperation Act of 2015, and to halt the wholesale slaughter of the Syrian people, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the end, add the following:

**TITLE V—MISCELLANEOUS**

**SEC. 501. ASSESSMENT OF COLLABORATIVE INITIATIVES OF THE UNITED STATES AND THE PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC OF CHINA RELATING TO SCIENTIFIC AND TECHNICAL COOPERATION.**

(a) **IN GENERAL.**—Not later than one year after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Comptroller General of the United States shall submit to Congress a report assessing collaborative initiatives of the United States and the People's Republic of China relating to scientific and technical cooperation.

(b) **ELEMENTS.**—The report required by subsection (a) shall include the following:

(1) A description of the nature of collaborative initiatives described in subsection (a), including how such initiatives are funded, who participates in such initiatives, and the outcomes of such initiatives.

(2) A description of the licensing and regulatory regime under which such initiatives occur.

(3) An assessment of whether the intellectual property rights of United States researchers and entities participating in such initiatives are being adequately protected.

(4) An assessment of whether entities owned or controlled by the government or the military of the People's Republic of China are benefitting from research funded by United States taxpayers.

(5) An assessment of whether any Chinese researchers participating in such initiatives have ties to the government or the military of the People's Republic of China.

(6) An assessment of whether any institutions of higher education, laboratories, or other entities in the United States participating in such initiatives have been subject to cyber penetration originating in the People's Republic of China.

(7) An evaluation of the benefits of such initiatives for the United States.

(8) An assessment of any redundancies among such initiatives.

(9) Recommendations for improving such initiatives.

**SA 88.** Mr. KENNEDY submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 65 proposed by Mr. McCONNELL (for himself, Mr. GRAHAM, Mr. BLUNT, Mr. BURR, Mr. ROMNEY, Ms. ERNST, Mr. INHOFE, Mr. RUBIO, Mr. SASSE, Mrs. FISCHER, Mr. GRASSLEY, Mr. JOHNSON, Mr. SHELBY, Mr. TILLIS, Mr. CORNYN, Mr. SULLIVAN, Mr. WICKER, Mr. LANKFORD, Mr. YOUNG, and Mr. BOOZMAN) to the bill S. 1, to make improvements to certain defense and security assistance provisions and to authorize the appropriation of funds to Israel, to reauthorize the United States-Jordan Defense Cooperation Act of 2015, and to halt the wholesale slaughter of the Syrian people, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the end, add the following:

**SEC. \_\_\_\_ . AUTHORIZATION.**

The President is hereby authorized to undertake military assistance and use of armed forces, if the President determines it necessary and appropriate, to defend the Kurds in Syria against armed aggression from any country or terrorist organization.

**ORDERS FOR THURSDAY,  
JANUARY 31, 2019**

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that when the Senate completes its business today, it adjourn until 10 a.m. Thursday, January 31; further, that following the prayer and pledge, the morning hour be deemed expired, the Journal of proceedings be approved to date, the time for the two leaders be reserved for their use later in the day, and morning business be closed; further, that following leader remarks, the Senate resume consideration of S. 1, and that notwithstanding rule XXII, the Senate vote on the motion to invoke cloture on the McConnell amendment No. 65 at 3:30 p.m. and that the mandatory quorum call be waived.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Without objection, it is so ordered.

**ADJOURNMENT UNTIL 10 A.M.  
TOMORROW**

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, if there is no further business to come before the Senate, I ask that it stand adjourned under the previous order.

There being no objection, the Senate, at 3:16 p.m., adjourned until Thursday, January 31, 2019, at 10 a.m.

**NOMINATIONS**

Executive nominations received by the Senate:

**DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION**

MARK SCHULTZ, OF NEBRASKA, TO BE COMMISSIONER OF THE REHABILITATION SERVICES ADMINISTRATION, DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION, VICE JANET LORRAINE LABRECK.

ROBERT L. KING, OF KENTUCKY, TO BE ASSISTANT SECRETARY FOR POSTSECONDARY EDUCATION, DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION, VICE EDUARDO M. OCHOA.

**IN THE NAVY**

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICER FOR APPOINTMENT IN THE UNITED STATES NAVY TO THE GRADE INDICATED UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 624:

*To be rear admiral*

REAR ADM. (LH) PETER G. STAMATOPOULOS

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICER FOR APPOINTMENT IN THE UNITED STATES NAVY TO THE GRADE INDICATED UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 624:

*To be rear admiral*

REAR ADM. (LH) GAYLE D. SHAFFER

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICERS FOR APPOINTMENT IN THE UNITED STATES NAVY TO THE GRADE INDICATED UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 624:

*To be rear admiral*

REAR ADM. (LH) KELLY A. AESCHBACH

REAR ADM. (LH) FRANK D. WHITWORTH

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICERS FOR APPOINTMENT IN THE UNITED STATES NAVY TO THE GRADE INDICATED UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 624:

*To be rear admiral*

REAR ADM. (LH) BLAKE L. CONVERSE

REAR ADM. (LH) CHARLES B. COOPER II

REAR ADM. (LH) DONALD D. GABRIELSON

REAR ADM. (LH) GREGORY N. HARRIS

REAR ADM. (LH) JEFFREY T. JABLON

REAR ADM. (LH) YANCY B. LINDSEY

REAR ADM. (LH) JOHN F. MEIER

REAR ADM. (LH) JAMES E. PITTS  
REAR ADM. (LH) JOHN B. SKILLMAN  
REAR ADM. (LH) KARL O. THOMAS  
REAR ADM. (LH) JOHN F. WADE  
REAR ADM. (LH) MICHAEL A. WETTLAUFER

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICER FOR APPOINTMENT  
IN THE UNITED STATES NAVY RESERVE TO THE GRADE  
INDICATED UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 12203:

*To be rear admiral*

REAR ADM. (LH) GENE F. PRICE

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICERS FOR APPOINTMENT  
IN THE UNITED STATES NAVY RESERVE TO THE GRADE  
INDICATED UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 12203:

*To be rear admiral*

REAR ADM. (LH) SHAWN E. DUANE  
REAR ADM. (LH) SCOTT D. JONES  
REAR ADM. (LH) JOHN B. MUSTIN  
REAR ADM. (LH) JOHN A. SCHOMMER

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICER FOR APPOINTMENT  
IN THE UNITED STATES NAVY RESERVE TO THE GRADE  
INDICATED UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 12203:

*To be rear admiral*

REAR ADM. (LH) ALAN J. REYES

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICER FOR APPOINTMENT  
IN THE UNITED STATES NAVY RESERVE TO THE GRADE  
INDICATED UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 12203:

*To be rear admiral*

REAR ADM. (LH) TROY M. MCCLELLAND

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICER FOR APPOINTMENT  
IN THE UNITED STATES NAVY TO THE GRADE INDICATED  
UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 624:

*To be rear admiral (lower half)*

CAPT. DEAN A. VANDERLEY

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICER FOR APPOINTMENT  
IN THE UNITED STATES NAVY TO THE GRADE INDICATED  
UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 624:

*To be rear admiral (lower half)*

CAPT. KENNETH W. EPPS

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICER FOR APPOINTMENT  
IN THE UNITED STATES NAVY TO THE GRADE INDICATED  
UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 624:

*To be rear admiral (lower half)*

CAPT. TIMOTHY H. WEBER

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICER FOR APPOINTMENT  
IN THE UNITED STATES NAVY TO THE GRADE INDICATED  
UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 624:

*To be rear admiral (lower half)*

CAPT. JAMES L. HANCOCK

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICER FOR APPOINTMENT  
IN THE UNITED STATES NAVY TO THE GRADE INDICATED  
UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 624:

*To be rear admiral (lower half)*

CAPT. NICHOLAS M. HOMAN  
CAPT. MICHAEL J. VERNAZZA

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICER FOR APPOINTMENT  
IN THE UNITED STATES NAVY TO THE GRADE INDICATED  
UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 624:

*To be rear admiral (lower half)*

CAPT. CHARLES W. BROWN

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICERS FOR APPOINTMENT  
IN THE UNITED STATES NAVY TO THE GRADE INDICATED  
UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 624:

*To be rear admiral (lower half)*

CAPT. SCOTT M. BROWN  
CAPT. CASEY J. MOTON  
CAPT. STEPHEN R. TEDFORD  
CAPT. ERIC H. VERHAGE

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICERS FOR APPOINTMENT  
IN THE UNITED STATES NAVY TO THE GRADE INDICATED  
UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 624:

*To be rear admiral (lower half)*

CAPT. JEFFREY T. ANDERSON  
CAPT. STEPHEN D. BARNETT  
CAPT. MICHAEL W. BAZE  
CAPT. RICHARD T. BROPHY, JR.  
CAPT. ANTHONY C. CARULLO  
CAPT. ROBERT B. CHADWICK II  
CAPT. JEFFREY J. CZEREWKO  
CAPT. MICHAEL P. DONNELLY  
CAPT. CHRISTOPHER M. ENGDAHL  
CAPT. ROBERT M. GAUCHER  
CAPT. DANIEL P. MARTIN  
CAPT. JOHN V. MENONI  
CAPT. CURT A. RENSHAW  
CAPT. SCOTT F. ROBERTSON  
CAPT. MILTON J. SANDS III  
CAPT. PAUL C. SPEDERO, JR.  
CAPT. CHRISTOPHER J. SWEENEY  
CAPT. JEROMY B. WILLIAMS

IN THE COAST GUARD

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICERS FOR APPOINTMENT  
IN THE UNITED STATES COAST GUARD TO THE GRADE IN-  
DICATED UNDER TITLE 14, U.S.C., SECTION 271(E):

*To be rear admiral (lower half)*

CAPT. BRENDAN C. MCPHERSON  
CAPT. DOUGLAS M. SCHOFIELD  
CAPT. ANDREW M. SUGIMOTO  
CAPT. RICHARD V. TIMME  
CAPT. TODD C. WIEMERS

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICERS FOR APPOINTMENT  
IN THE UNITED STATES COAST GUARD TO THE GRADE IN-  
DICATED UNDER TITLE 14, U.S.C., SECTION 2121(D):

*To be rear admiral*

REAR ADM. (LH) MELVIN W. BOUBOULIS  
REAR ADM. (LH) DONNA L. COTTRELL  
REAR ADM. (LH) MICHAEL J. JOHNSTON  
REAR ADM. (LH) ERIC C. JONES  
REAR ADM. (LH) MICHAEL P. RYAN